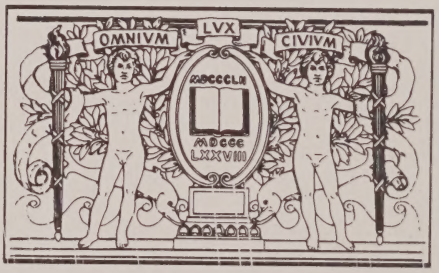
Nature Cruisings

By
Van Schaick



BOSTON
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

Very Sincerely Yours.

John Van Schaick, Jr.

Boston, December 7, 1928.

FROM THE TOP OF COBBLE MOUNTAIN

Looking down into our Hollow

NATURE CRUISINGS

to the

OLD HOME TOWN

and the

LITTLE HILL FARM

by

JOHN VAN SCHAICK, JR.

Editor of the Christian Leader

Author of

The Little Corner Never Conquered
Cruising Around a Changing World
Cruising Cross Country

THE MURRAY PRESS
Boston, Mass.
1928

3816.170

Copyright, 1928, by the
UNIVERSALIST PUBLISHING HOUSE

Dedicated to all the
Folks in the Old Home Town

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

"The Madame" has helped make this book, a great number of friendly folk have cheered Johannes along the way, and Miss Florence I. Adams has read the proofs, seen the book through the press, and has helped generously in other ways.

We are indebted to Mr. Lynn M. Reightmyer, teller of the Farmers' and Merchants' Bank, Cobleskill, N. Y., for permission to use his pictures of "The Park," "The Lower Red Bridge," "One of the Camps on Summit Lake," and "A Typical Schoharie County Valley," and to Mr. Frank H. Ryder of the Harder Refrigerator Corporation for permission to use the picture "From the Top of Cobble Mountain."

CONTENTS

THE OLD HOME TOWN

Chapter		Page
I.	The Background of a Summer Trip	13
II.	Our Village Fifty Years Ago	19
III.	Up the Valley at Break of Day	31
IV.	Once More on the Old Frontier	40
V.	Apples from Home	48
VI.	The Study of Trees	55
VII.	Getting to Know the Maples	64
VIII.	A Few Days Off	72
IX.	Going Home for Christmas	79
X.	Christmas at the Old Home, 1927	85
XI.	One More Christmas, 1928	92
XII.	The Days of Real Sport	102

WHERE CITY AND COUNTRY MEET

XIII.	The Mother Bird and the Lease	113
XIV.	Our Eighth Floor Front	121
XV.	From the High Tower Room	130
XVI.	In the Valley of the Muddy	140
XVII.	My Duck Friends	146
XVIII.	Another Winter with the Ducks	155
XIX.	The Coming of Spring to the Fenway	164
XX.	Getting Acquainted with the Fox-Sparrow	171
XXI.	Some Incidents of the Migration	178

ALONG THE SPOKES OF THE HUB

XXII.	The Arnold Arboretum	191
XXIII.	In the Time of the Dogwood	200
XXIV.	The Thorns and the Crab Apples	208

Chapter		Page
XXV.	The Call of the Blue Hills	216
XXVI.	An All Day Trip in Agawam	225
XXVII.	Winter Sunshine at the Wayside Inn	235
	DOWN ON THE POTOMAC	
XXVIII.	The Search for the Gallinules	249
XXIX.	The Great Falls of the Potomac	258
XXX.	A Wild Gorge of the Potomac	267
XXXI.	Two Nature Walks in Virginia	276
XXXII.	The Friendly Folks of Maryland	285
XXXIII.	The Anti-Mollycoddle Club	294
	THE EDITOR AFIELD	
XXXIV.	A Week-End in Bucksport	305
XXXV.	The Charm of Old Bucksport	313
XXXVI.	On the Southwestern and the Wolverine	323
XXXVII.	Down in Egypt	331
XXXVIII.	A Journey to North Carolina	340
XXXIX.	Ferry Beach and the Great Wide Sea	347
XL.	The First Trip to Cape Cod	354
XLI.	Two Nature Lectures in One Day	362
XLII.	The Pilgrimage to Old Kensington	369
	THE LITTLE HILL FARM	
XLIII.	The First Day at the Farm	381
XLIV.	A Year Later	390
XLV.	A Bird for the Life-List	397
XLVI.	Some of the Common Weeds	406
XLVII.	When the Swallows Leave the Nest	415
XLVIII.	Two September Week-Ends	423
XLIX.	Bits about the Farm	430
L.	Talks with Neighbors about Religion.	439

PREFACE

"Our people must have another book of Cruisings," said the manager. "Especially is there a call for a volume made up of the nature cruisings and those dealing with the old home town. Put them together for the early fall." As this request, or order, came along the middle of August, there was not much time. But the material was at hand. For weal or woe what the editor does is caught and held fast in immovable type. His is the immortality of metal. It is a short-lived fame, for the foreman of the composing room always is clamoring to "throw it in." The finest brain-children of the editor, fixed for the ages in a substance far more enduring than paper, have to go into the melting pot to furnish metal for next week's paper. The foreman can not have his place all cluttered up with accumulated Cruisings. But if we bring out a book, then he can have a field day. He can fill the pot full and fill her up again. He can get hold of metal enough to keep him still for a year. So to obey the manager and to please the foreman, I undertake this book.

Up under the roof, on the hottest 16th of August in forty years, the Madame and I began the task of reading, sorting and editing. In my last book I half apologized for permitting these articles written for the *Christian Leader* to find their way between covers. No such feeling moves me now. Rereading the work of a year or more, I am astounded by the knowledge I once had and by my prodigious industry. Like "the little old woman whose skirts were cut to her knees while she slept," I exclaim, "Can this be I!" Evidently it can, for the dogs I love still know me. The articles do not seem so bad either. Reader, note how inevitably the most sensitive and modest become hard-boiled and cocksure under the scourgings of the editorial task. So this book is sent forth with confidence. It ought to sell. The royalties should enable me to retire. Is it injudicious to drop this bit of a hint? If there be those who think there ought to be another editor and that this editor should stick to Cruisings, let them try the experiment of buying many copies of this book at full list price and broadcasting its fame. The editor can not

honorably make any promises, but he assures gentle readers everywhere that he will view such experiments with sympathy. This much is sure, a man ought to be able to write his best when he deals with the old home town, the folks he loves, the great out of doors and the little things of his every-day life.

The chapters have all appeared in the *Christian Leader*, the official weekly journal of the Universalist Church, of which the author is the editor.

John van Schaick, Jr.

Boston, August 17, 1928.

The Old Home Town

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND OF A SUMMER TRIP

"THE hottest July third I ever knew on the road," said the big jolly D. & H. conductor as we stood on the Albany platform the morning of the Fourth. "I came out of Binghamton at 7 a. m. yesterday, and I was dripping wet before we had gone ten miles. I drew a tub of cold water when I got home and lay in it. Then last night I took my car and drove out into the country for an hour and a half, cooled off, went to bed and slept like a top. So here I be ready for another red-hot Fourth."

That was about our experience in Boston. It was hotter getting home the night of the third than it had been before this year. Instead of going down to dinner as we had planned, we ate cold mixed fruit out of the ice box, ice cream which I went out to get, and left-overs. It was far better than a banquet. Then we took the last of the bread in the bread box and went down to the Fenway to sit on the grass and feed the baby ducks. All the babies were missing for a while, but twenty-five bedraggled looking mallards and blacks came around to see us and accept our offerings. The breeding season, the battles with water rats over their nests and babies, had been hard on them, and now moulting had started. We would hardly have known the glorious mallard males of the winter season. Luckily we hung on to some of the bread until the last moment, for just as we were going a mother mallard came around a bend of the Muddy swimming for all she was worth, with two babies cutting through the water in her wake like torpedo boats following a transport. The mother was un-

usually wild, but the babies came up boldly. How fast they can make their little feet go! With what speed they can dart for an insect or a crumb of bread! How gallantly they swim between huge old ducks that threaten to crush them or run them down! They are marvelously graceful, beautiful, little things. While the mother no longer had to grab food for them she did make furious rushes at ducks which got too near her babies, and gave to several jabs with her beak they will remember.

It was light after dinner for a long time and we read aloud. Lately we have picked up again "Nature Studies in Berkshire," by John Coleman Adams. Here on the bank with the ducks around us under a red oak we read for the second time in two days his chapter, "Under the Maples." The hot steaming July day in New York which he described, the contrast with a cool evening in his beloved Berkshire County, seemed to fit our mood. One can not turn back to the writings of Coleman Adams without realizing anew the beauty of his style. He was not strong on details. He was not a great naturalist, but he was a great nature lover. And best of all, he was a great soul. In "Under the Maples" we do not find out whether they were red maples, or Norway maples, or sugar maples, but we learn what the great trees had to say to Dr. Adams.

"It seems," he says, "as if the maples had imbibed something of the life and spirit of that race by whose homes they have grown lo these many ages. . . . To be sure the maple is still associated with the forest, and so far has a suggestion of wild nature. But seen near the homes of man, sheltering his roof and shading his door yard, it sheds its wildness as a house dog sheds his wolfish traits."

"If the pines," he adds, "utter a deep contralto note, full of pathos and suggestions of the undying

solemnities of the world, surely the voice of the maple is the stirring tenor breathing the lively song of action, the chant of good cheer and the prophecy of weal."

In his preaching, his poems, his prose writings, we find expressed the same philosophy—action, good cheer, prophecy of weal.

"I feel sorry for you," said one of our friends, when he heard we were going off on a sleeper such a hot night. But really we got along very well. I did not wait for the music of the wheels—tap, tap, tap, tap—to lull me to sleep, but dropped off to the sound of firecrackers in the South Station. Only at Springfield did I wake for a moment, and then not again until we had been in Albany for over half an hour. The Madame did not do quite so well, asserting that with just a sheet she did not have enough over her, and with a blanket about ten times too much. Why not invent a blanket from which we can peel off just the weight we need?

Whatever discomforts the night had, we forgot them in the beauty of the ride up on the old D. & H. "toward Binghamton." It is worth having a cold, wet June if a hot, sunny July is to follow, for the contrast is refreshing. In the cold and rain the grasses and wild flowers get their roots well down and then when growth starts it is both strong and thick. A cold spring makes a big hay crop. A cold spring, if not too cold, makes millions of wild-flowers and a thick growth of leaves on trees and bushes. We were traveling up in the time of roses—the New York State time of roses. Some of the dingy backyards along the D. & H. tracks leaving Albany were glorious with them. When we had passed the falls of the Normanskill and topped the rise, we found the meadows more wonderful than we had ever seen them. From an agricultural standpoint some of the things

we saw were to be deprecated, but from an esthetic standpoint the daisies and buttercups and black-eyed susans and wild parsnip in the clover and timothy grass added immensely to the beauty. After Altamont, when we began to climb up into the hills, we passed old pastures full of the sweet-brier of which we have such quantities at the little hill farm. On the steep banks of the railroad here and there and in many of the fields where soil was poorer, the ground was red with devil's paintbrush. When we reached the upper levels and began to notice the sky stretching away northward to the Mohawk we saw that the day was fair, not a dazzling blue sky, but a faint blue sky, with filmy clouds and a heat haze all over it.

The birds did not exhibit themselves for us. Dogs and birds both lie low on a hot Fourth of July. The most striking birds we saw from the car windows were some red-winged blackbirds swaying up and down on the reeds of a swamp—a restful sight on a hot morning.

The hills, too, when we began to see them, blue and hazy in the distance, brought rest and healing. Just to look off at the blue hills makes such a trip worth while. Then when the country has associations the rest medicine becomes more potent. When to lush meadows in wide valleys, blue hills, old pastures, wooded roads and wooded heights, one adds memories of the old home and of childhood, cares fall off magically and ebbing youth comes back. When the train passes the county line and one senses that he is back in old Schoharie the eye drinks in everything greedily—shape, color, movement, people, animals. The first town one strikes in Schoharie County is Esperance. Somebody who knew French and had hope must have named it a century ago. When the train stops at Schoharie Junction, we

always find ourselves on a curve near the junction of the Cobleskill and Schoharie Valleys, and we can look up the valley of the Cobleskill five or six miles to the hills of the old home town.

It is always with a swelling heart that the returning traveler who is "an exile from home" sees these hills. They look down on his native village. Over them he may have tramped in his boyhood and young manhood both winter and summer. On their heights he has lain on many a warm summer afternoon with dog and books. On them the eye of parents and brothers and sister rested too. Older generations, which he barely remembers, saw them and loved them.

Admit all the narrowness of country life as compared with city, there is a depth to it often lacking in the cities. It is the more normal way to live. One is foolish who does not recognize breadth in the country and depth in the city, but the general proposition is sound that life spreads out more in the city and goes deeper down in the country. With all the insistence we are making in editorials, in contributions, everywhere, for breadth, we try to recognize that there is not anything really comparable to plumbing the depths.

Getting away from work and having a trip like this, one is able to scrutinize the work more carefully and appraise it more justly. Getting back to the old home town, the depths of feeling are stirred. One realizes better what parents, grandparents, even great grandparents (if he is as lucky as all that), neighbors, tradespeople, family friends and relatives did for him when he was growing up. It is a good thing to remember, and to let gratitude well up. It is a good thing to reflect on the solemn mystery of life—the accidents or chances or fates or Divine leading which brought ancestors into this particular valley,

the power that was with them in their day, long in years, short in fact, and the guidance we ourselves have had.

One laughs quickly and tears start easily on the morning one comes back into the valley where he was born.

It is hard to feel patriotic when one is disgusted with the bombast or boasting of a cheap orator. It is easy to feel patriotic when one sees the flag hung out in all its beauty on the first house of his native village. Then with full heart he sings:

> "Land where my fathers died,
> Land of the Pilgrim's pride,
> From every mountain side
> Let freedom ring."

The finer the love one has for his home, the better the love he has for the nation and for the entire human family to which we all belong.

Cobleskill, N. Y., July 4, 1928.

CHAPTER II

OUR VILLAGE FIFTY YEARS AGO

THE editor of the *Cobleskill* (N. Y.) *Times* writes and requests an article on "Cobleskill Fifty Years Ago."

As I was born November 18, 1873, I was only four years old half a century ago. Memory, however, goes back as far as that, for I recall the excitement of the "Hayes-Tilden" campaign of '76. More vividly I recall the torchlight processions of the "Garfield-Arthur" and "Hancock-English" contest of 1880 and the "Cleveland-Hendricks" and "Blaine-Logan" campaign of 1884. In the latter campaign I marched with a number of small boys as a rear guard of a long Cleveland procession, clad in little oilskin capes and carrying lanterns. A local merchant, Sigbert Bornstein, lined us up before we started and taught us a rhyme which we chanted as we marched: "Blaine, Blaine, James G. Blaine, is writing a book, way up in Maine." This was considered highly derogatory to Blaine, but why I never knew. I was puzzled at the time and somewhat doubtful of the proceedings, and my doubt has increased with the years.

But I never had any doubt about Grover Cleveland. When he ran for President in 1884, he was Governor of New York State. The same fall my father ran for the State Senate and was elected. Cleveland went through our village on the Binghamton-Albany train late one afternoon during the campaign. I can still remember the feeling I had as my father came through the door of the rear car to the back platform of the train, followed by Cleveland, both tall, heavy men, and said: "Friends and Fellow Citizens, his

Excellency, the Honorable Grover Cleveland." At that moment there came a veritable downpour of rain. William S. McIntosh, our neighbor, with long white beard, handed up an umbrella for Cleveland, and the Governor leaned down and shook hands with the crowd of hardy ones who braved the rain. Hundreds ran for the shelter of trees and buildings, but I never budged. I watched the great man while the rain soaked through my little shirt-waist and ran down my legs. As the train started he returned the McIntosh umbrella with a smile, and the crowd cheered.

Cleveland was elected President in November and inaugurated in March. Father, who also had been elected Senator, took his three little boys into Albany to see the Governor and President-elect. Daniel S. Lamont, Secretary to the President in the first Cleveland administration and Secretary of War in the second administration, sat in the big Executive Chamber at the State Capitol. He waved us on into the private offices—into one little room, no one there, into a second, also empty, into a third, and there sat the big man at the desk, a cheerful fire blazing in the fireplace. For some time he chatted with father about the Legislature, about Washington, about the reception the night before. "The first time I have opened my house to the ladies," said the bachelor Governor. Then father presented us, Charles, John, Louis J., the Governor repeating the names, shaking each little hand with a quizzical smile, toying the while with his gold nose-glasses.

He asked about the rest of the family, and was told about the little sister at home. Our full quota of six had not yet been reached. "Three boys and one girl," said the big man; "how many sisters is that apiece?" That threw us all into dismay. I feared he wanted fractions, with which I was just getting acquainted. Charlie kicked the carpet and shifted from

one leg to another. Louis looked stolidly ahead. Finally the Governor relieved our tension by saying, "A puzzle. Work it out." As we left the office father said, "Why didn't you speak up and tell him one sister apiece?" That was my first inkling of the answer. I was still working on fractions.

When Cleveland resigned as Governor, Hill, the Lieutenant-Governor, succeeded him. From that time on a rivalry grew up between the two men, and all Democratic politics were colored by it.

I speak of it here because it split our local community. Father took the Cleveland side and the local Democratic leaders in Cobleskill espoused the cause of Governor Hill. With all the memories of friendship and kindness in the Cobleskill of twenty-five and fifty years ago there come down the memories of the bitter enmities caused by these political divisions.

Republican-Democratic contests were tame in comparison to the Cleveland-Hill contests up in our county.

We were brought up on law and politics, but there were influences which kept us from becoming too narrow in our partisanship.

Mother, by marrying father, became a loyal Democrat, at least so far as father's interests were concerned, but she never quite forgot that her father was a Republican. And we children never forgot it either. Grandfather's was a home that was Exhibit A for Republicanism—grandfather, Uncle Stant as he grew up, and grandmother and the aunts also, in so far as they could be anything in those days. Besides, we heard about this one and that one among the young Republicans who took off their coats and helped roll up a big majority for father as a local candidate. Independency came as natural to us as breathing. And we have lived to see it become a

dominating tendency in the politics of the entire country.

Along the line of school and church, I can go back almost as far as I can in politics. An awe-inspiring man named Boss was the first principal whom I can remember. I had no reason to fear him unless it was the way the other boys spoke about being "sent up to the principal." He soon went, and an Irishman and Catholic named Burke came to our town as principal. Looking back now, it seems rather strange that a village almost exclusively Protestant should select a Catholic principal. Apparently the Board of Education took the broad, sensible position that they would get a good man no matter what his belief. Burke was a good man. He was a "driller." Over and over again he would review what we had gone over. "Battle of Bannockburn," he would almost shout. His long arm would shoot out and his index finger aim for my head, and I'd hear "*You.*" I can answer "1314" as easily to-day as I could forty years ago. Burke made Robert Bruce live again for me. On my first trip to Scotland I went out of my way to visit Stirling Castle, Bannockburn and other memorials of Wallace and Bruce. Grover Cleveland appointed Principal Burke Superintendent of Indian Schools at Albuquerque, N. M., and our little school world was shaken to its foundation. Seeley, Snell and Ryan, who successively followed as principals, each made distinct contributions to the community, and the school always has had a standing which has attracted students from all the surrounding country.

I can not be too grateful for the religious influences about me in childhood. Here again the homes of two grandfathers, who were officers in the church and had family prayers, admirably supplemented our own home, which had Sunday newspapers

and a rather liberal attitude toward Sabbath observance.

When I began to observe, Cobleskill had three churches, Methodist, Lutheran and Catholic. The Catholic burned and for some years I think ceased to exist. If masses were said in private houses I did not know about it.

Grandfather Shaver was a Methodist, and one of the most devout, tolerant, kindly men I ever knew. Mother was a Methodist, but not able to care for six children and go to church regularly, and impatient with some things in the Methodist rules and discipline. Her mother was a Lutheran until her marriage, and so we never could be partisans in any little temporary jealousies between the churches. Both father and mother insisted on our going to Sunday school regularly, but both scotched promptly the tendency to think that any one minister knew it all or any one church had all the light. Father's father and mother lived on a farm, and were Dutch Reformed. They were honored and trusted in all the country round. That made us, as children, confident that the Dutch Reformed were good people too. When John G. Fagg, a young Dutch Reformed minister, just out of college, came to the village from Lawyersville and held services in the skating rink on Sunday afternoons, we went regularly for some time. Even father turned out for Fagg, contrary to his usual custom of going only on Thanksgiving Day, or at Easter or Commencement, or other special occasions.

Father would take Sunday for odd jobs around the place, a thing mother never objected to, unless the jobs were too much in the sight of people coming home from church. Village standards never permitted us to get out our playthings on Sunday or go on excursions, although I early imbibed the idea that "very quiet things" were all right in the sight of the Lord,

and a special dispensation attached to hitching up "Bill," the big bay horse, and driving over to Grandfather van Schaick's at Sharon Hill for Sunday dinner.

When I began to understand "doctrine" I worried considerably over the possibility of father going to hell because he was not converted. Mother reassured me with the idea that if one were honest and paid his debts and tried to be a good neighbor it would carry him through. At any rate fears of that kind speedily evaporated. But I want to both laugh and cry when I remember that I ever worried that way about the rugged, upstanding man he was.

We never had any "heretical" literature. We never had any preachers in the town when I was growing up who were under suspicion for liberal views. And yet I did not grow up illiberal. As I look back it seems to me that the people who influenced me in church and Sunday school and day school and home must have been people of a liberal spirit, willing to live and let live, people who had views but who did not assume that they knew it all, or that anybody else did, for that matter. That there is a good God and that He cares for us, that prayer to Him is perfectly natural, that the way of Jesus is the way for us, and that "faith without works is dead because it standeth alone," some way or another got set in me deep down back in the Cobleskill of the eighties. College may have helped me clarify my thinking, but as I go back in memory I believe I got my fundamental ideas in Cobleskill.

The biggest thing that can happen to a growing boy religiously is not an experience in a revival meeting, but in some way or other to get his mind opened to the idea that all truth is sacred, that all comes from God, and that no one truth can possibly conflict with any other truth.

Such a boy eventually will see that what counts

is not what a man thinks he thinks, but what deep down he really does think. He will get an insight which will enable him to look back of the Catholic mass or the Methodist prayer-meeting to the essential fact that here are people kneeling down before the same God, who can not be changed or hurt or increased or diminished by any words they use or fail to use about Him. Half the atheists come from people of narrow spirit insisting that some way or word or name or ceremony is necessary in order to be religious.

Both the Methodist church in Cobleskill, in which I grew up and got my first training, and the dignified old Lutheran church where I declaimed my high school graduating oration, are dear to me. And so are the other churches, the Baptist and Reformed, which have come in since my boyhood, and the Catholic also, from the memory of playmates and schoolfellows who went to mass and grew up good citizens of the community. This is not saying, "It does not matter what you believe." It is saying, "What you believe deep down inside and act on, matters much more than your creed." It is also saying that "people get drawn close to other people who 'believe deep down inside' what they themselves believe, whether the denominational labels they wear are the same or not."

How did Cobleskill look to a little boy in a large yard on Grand Street, forty or fifty years ago? Nobody can answer that. All I can do is to tell a few things I remember.

The front horse-block and the back garden fence bounded the Hub of the Universe to that little boy—a Hub a little under an acre in size. Pindar's Hill, the Picnic Woods just beyond, Main Street, Shanks Mountain, Sharon Hill and Carlisle and Albany were the high spots in the rest of the universe.

Grand Street was a main thoroughfare leading

in a northerly direction to the Mohawk Valley. Up past the house at noon went the Sharon and Canajoharie stage, heavily laden usually, horses usually slow and jaded. Back just at dark it came, horses hurrying for the warm stall and oats. Heavy work teams went up and down all day, hauling blue limestone from the quarries of Riley and Scanlon to the railroad, and hauling threshers and horse powers from the Empire Agricultural Works just above us. In one form or another this industry has remained all through the years the most solid business of the town.

A flock of sheep or drove of cattle coming down the street, or even a yoke of oxen, which in those days were still used somewhat, interested us greatly. We reached a high pitch of excitement with a circus, a runaway or a fire. Those were the days when the poor caged lion was in reality "the king of beasts," a scrawny tiger "a man killer," and an elephant the embodiment of majesty, might and romance. All my illusions about circuses have vanished. Probably it is because so much of the circus is paint, tinsel and make-believe. But about runaways and fires I feel the same as I used to. They involve the same old battle with danger, the same old issues of life and death.

The neighbors were good to us. On one side there was Dr. Fox, the dentist, who charged my mother a quarter to pull my first aching tooth and then gave me back ten cents for being a good boy. I can remember his father too, "most a hundred years old." Once he was helped into our sitting-room half fainting, and revived with a glass of port wine. I still can see the color come back into his pale face as he sipped the bracing drink.

On the other side, south of us, where the Supreme Court Judge now lives, was the old Burhans house, where I was a special favorite. Seldom did their

colored man hitch up the big black horses to the barouche that I was not sent for and taken along on the drive. On the top shelf of the pantry they had a toy, "Topsy" in a glass covered box, who danced when the box was tipped over and back again. On the lower pantry shelves there were cookies and apples with which I was regaled before we started out. It would be hard to find a better example of kindness in extreme old age than in the case of Mrs. Burhans. She was keen and bright also, and helped form my taste for history by telling about "the way it used to be" when her father's house, the second above us, now called the old Pindar house, was the only house on Grand Street, when Mill Creek used to run where our own house stood and across our garden, and made its way to the Cobleskill Creek across the flats south of Prospect Street and down by the Kling farm, and when her father's tannery stood on the land between the John Hank Tator place and Grand Street. But that is going back into the Cobleskill of 100 and 150 years ago. There were just ten houses between us and Grandmother Shaver's, and we knew all the people in them. Some of them have changed hands three or four or even more times in the last forty years. All of the old heads of families up to whom we looked with considerable awe in those days have gone—Muller, Fox, Burhans, Osterhout, Cohn, Overpaugh, Nell Shafer, Captain Calkins, Barlow, Zenas France, Jimmie Lawyer, Wm. Ottman, Chas. H. Shaver, William Shafer, on our side of the street, McIntosh, Tuck, Brown, Henry Smith, Kasson Shaver, Chauncey Boorne, Empie, on the other side. In only five of the houses do children or grandchildren of the old families live to-day.

My father was a lawyer, and so we knew the lawyers best. Father was one of the men who talk at table. Before us at meal time passed in review

his friends and his enemies and all the incidents of the town.

Billy Young, with whom he studied law, and who lived long enough to trot me in his arms but whom I can not remember, Judge Holmes, whom father especially admired as a great legal light and whom he mourned as a light too soon obscured, the two Lamonts, John Pindar, George Hiller, Albert Baker, Charles Nichols, Hobart Krum and Judge Mayham, were all familiar to us. In a younger set were George M. Palmer, L. W. and M. D. Baxter, Marsh Hemperley and the three Holmes boys, and Coons and Jackson of Sharon. I am not attempting to give the roster of the bar of Schoharie County. I am calling up names as familiar at our table when I was growing up as those of my own relatives. All but three are dead. Others have taken up the responsibility of maintaining the legal standards of the old county.

Some of these men attained considerable reputation in the state as able and successful lawyers.

Although I never was admitted to the bar, father sent me as a boy of sixteen or seventeen to try two or three justice court cases. I remember I appeared before George Palmer sitting as a justice, and that his partner Hiller was in the room. Greener advocate never pleaded a case. Only the absence of my opponent saved me. Having done all I could remember of what father had said I was silent. "Well," said the Justice kindly, "how will you prove thus and so?" I was stumped, but Hiller slid around and whispered, "Swear the plaintiff." "Swear the plaintiff," I choked, sweating profusely. So the plaintiff was sworn and I asked the questions, Hiller whispering a final one something to the effect that this John Doe was the same John Doe as aforesaid. "All right," said the Justice. "Judgment." That stumped me. Now I

had it, what was I going to do with it? "I don't suppose you want an execution to-day," said the Justice. I looked at my client and he at me, and said, "Any day will do," and the court adjourned.

The memory of the issue has entirely faded. The memory of the kindness these men showed to a green boy is all that sticks.

Thirty, forty, fifty years ago in Cobleskill the surrounding hills and neighboring valleys were much the same.

Then, as now, one of my chief delights was to climb to the higher points and get the views. Then as now it seemed to give me a little clearer idea of the meaning of life and of my part in it. Up on the hills some things which had seemed big shrank to their true proportions, and things covered over by the rush of life stood out again and were seen in their true worth. Not money, not fame, not power, really amount to much. Love and help of one another, neighborliness, largeness of view, faith in the Power that made the hills and made us, are what really count.

Looking back at the village of fifty years ago, seen only dimly now, idealized perhaps somewhat "as fond recollection presents it to view," I am convinced that it was a good place to grow up in.

It had its wickedness, its selfishness, its narrowness, but the forces which dominated the village were good forces. They built up schools and churches, and encouraged boys and girls to grow up to be a credit to their folks. The beautiful picture which Corporal Tanner paints in his little booklet, "Glimpses of Cobleskill 1852-1927," of how "the old Judge" sent for a foolish boy and brought him back from his foolishness, reflects the true idealism of the community. One early mistake of refusing a public library has been corrected, and a public library has been launched.

The great advantage of life in a village is the opportunity it gives for a boy or girl to get acquainted with all kinds of people. The children of the man who earns his living with his brain grow up with the children of the man who works with his hands, and it is good for both. Life in a village gives opportunity for all children to take responsibility and do chores, and that puts something in a child no schooling can possibly give. But the village life is like water. It must be a living stream and run on, or it will become a swamp.

CHAPTER III

UP THE VALLEY AT BREAK OF DAY

THE morning after the Fourth of July, my youngest brother had a business engagement in Delaware County (New York), some seventy miles from Cobleskill, where he lives. I agreed to go with him to Sidney, sixty miles away, and to come home by rail.

For one used to living by Daylight Saving it is no hardship to get up at 4 a. m. In fact it is one of the things I take most delight in doing. Although my brother had said, "We will start at 5 and stop at the restaurant for breakfast," I preferred my own coffee fresh made, boiled in an old-fashioned pot which I found on a top shelf, made with an egg and "twice turned over." When such coffee is right it is the color of priceless old amber. Eating thus in the dewy freshness of the early morning, with bread and wild strawberry jam and coffee set on the kitchen table, the beautiful old cat and her two homely kittens hilariously happy to have somebody around at that hour of the day, one feels he is indeed master of his fate, a captain of his soul. A bit of the boasted liberty of his country belongs to him.

Our route was along the main water courses, southwest all the way, up the valley of the Cobleskill to its source, over the watershed to the Schenevus Creek, and down that stream and along the Susquehanna River to Sidney. The road we followed was one of the main state routes running from Albany and Schenectady to Binghamton and recently named the Schohanna Trail. From the standpoint of scenery, it is as satisfying as one can find in many a day's

journey. It is the scenery of green smiling valleys and wooded hillsides, of gently curving roads and changing grades, of deep meadows and hill pastures, of prosperous villages and successful dairy farms. After wild gorges and steep mountains or weary miles straight away over monotonous level country, the motorist finds these valleys a paradise.

I used to think that perhaps I looked at these hills through eyes blinded by affection, but as I have traveled around this old world I have become convinced that on their own merits they can hold their own with any section.

Just west of Cobleskill there is an especially beautiful part of the road. It is the divide between the waters of the Cobleskill, which make their way to the Mohawk, and the waters of the Schenevus, which reach the ocean through the Susquehanna. The hills, only six or seven hundred feet above the floor of the valley, are over two thousand feet above sea level. As one nears the divide he seems to have reached the end of the route. The hills close in and apparently there is no way through. Then the road makes a curve and ahead we see the pass. As one begins to go down the Schenevus, the valley gradually broadens. Near the old historic town of Unadilla, the state road runs for miles along the broader Susquehanna, calm and peaceful here and thickly shaded with elms and willows.

The farms in this region are dairy farms. Far up the steep hillsides close to the edge of the woods, and sometimes down on the level valley land, one sees the black and white cattle. Tearing over the road in the early morning are the big milk trucks on their way to the milk station where cars are loaded for New York. On the bottom lands there are meadows of clover and timothy for hay, and corn-fields on which are produced the crops which are cut up

THE OLD HOME TOWN

and placed in silos so the cattle can have green food in winter. Besides milk, potatoes are an important crop. There are many apple orchards. And farming is enough diversified so that there never is a complete crop failure in this section.

It is a shaded country with sugar maples along the roadsides and an occasional elm or white pine to give variety, noble elms or maples by themselves in the fields, and nearly every hill covered with forests of maple, birch, beech, and hemlock. One does not realize in such a wooded country that our trees are being butchered and our lumber problem becoming acute. It is in precisely this kind of region where there is so much natural forest land that movements to encourage reforestation are gaining momentum. East of Oneonta, we passed a hill taken over by a group of Oneonta citizens and set to young trees—a group interested in game and fish as well as forests. Near Colliers close to the road we passed a sign: "Scotch Pine Seedlings planted May 6, 1924, by the Briggs Lumber Company. Have you planted your tree this year?" Boy Scouts in the larger communities sometimes turn out to help plant trees.

My brother told me about an interesting experiment made by the Board of Supervisors of Schoharie County. They secured possession of a 260 acre hill farm which had to be sold for taxes, and planted 250,000 trees on it, the members of the Board and their friends turning out and making a field day and picnic of the planting.

On my lap as we traveled smoothly and swiftly up the valley I held an old book—"Gazetteer of the State of New York, Embracing a Comprehensive View of the Geography, Geology and General History of the State," published in 1860. It is the book that my grandfather and grandmother took with them in the buggy when they made what was for

them a notable trip to western New York many years ago. "Every county, city, town, village and locality" is described. Grandmother held the book on her lap and read while grandfather drove. She told us the story when she was very old and we were very young. History was repeating itself, but where they took weeks we took hours.

These valleys were settled forty to sixty years before the American Revolution, but the first settlers, as so often happened in the history of our country, literally took their lives in their hands. During the French and Indian Wars and Revolution they were "on the border," or the frontier between the English settlements and the French possessions. Perhaps it is more accurate to say that they lived in "No Man's Land."

There is interesting history in the names of the places we passed. Cobleskill is Dutch overlaid with Indian—at least according to one tradition—meaning the "kill" or "creek" of Cobus, one of the chiefs of the early days. A less romantic tradition says that Cobel, a white man, built a mill on the "kill." Warnerville is the ville or village of the Warners. At one time both George Warner and his two sons, George and Nicholas, were prisoners of the Indians, Nicholas soon escaping, the others remaining in captivity until the end of the war.

It is a country of Indian traditions and Indian names. Schoharie and Otsego, the two counties through which we were traveling, are both Indian. Schoharie means "driftwood," and comes from a driftwood bridge the Indians used to cross the Schoharie River. Otsego, or Otesaga, probably refers to a large stone at the outlet of Otsego Lake. The Indian name of Cobleskill, Otsgaragu, is no longer used. It means "hemp hill." Schenevus, twenty-two miles west of Cobleskill, on the Schenevus Creek,

is from the Indian word Schavus, or "the first hoeing of corn."

The little events of every day life show in the names the Indians used. Indian corn helped fix many names. Niskayuna in Otsego County and in Schenectady County means "the corn people," or "extensive corn flats." Onistagrawa, a hill near Middleburg in Schoharie County, means corn mountain. Succotash, made from corn and beans, and suppawn, boiled Indian meal, are two of the Indian words which have survived.

Oneonta, which we reached an hour after we left Cobleskill, means "a stony place," not a very accurate description of the thriving city of to-day. Otego, the next village southwest of Oneonta, is Wanteghe, "the village further down."

Unadilla, or Deunadilla, near the end of our morning drive, means "a place of meeting." W. M. Beauchamp, who wrote "Indian Names in New York," whose guidance we follow on several of these names, says that the name might have come from the fact that the Oneidas or the Mohawks joined forces here on their southern expeditions, or simply from the meeting of the two rivers. Brant, the famous Mohawk chieftain, held important conferences here.

The old Indian trails followed the water courses where they could. The tide of invasion more than once rolled down the valley up which we were traveling. The worst invasion of Cobleskill was in 1778—Saturday the first day of June. Brant, the college-bred Indian chieftain, led a force of 350 Tories and Indians to Cherry Valley, which seemed to be too well protected. So he made for the little settlement at Cobleskill, whether over the hill to what is now East Worcester or down the West Branch I do not know. We are sure that there were Indian scouts in the woods between what is now Richmondville and East Worces-

ter on May 30, for two of the Cobleskill men had a hand to hand conflict with them, leaving one Indian dead on the ground. The presence of hostile Indians so near impelled the little company of militia at Cobleskill to send for help immediately to the fort at Schoharie, nine miles away. Captain Patrick led thirty or forty regulars to reinforce Captain Christian Brown and his company of sixteen or twenty local volunteers. If only the local man could have taken the command, the story might have been different. Fifty or sixty could never have defeated three hundred and fifty, but they need not have marched into a trap. As it was they proceeded up the Cobleskill until they saw a small force of Indians in the open apparently maneuvering to lure them on. Brown wanted to stop, but Patrick insisted on an advance. As a result the little force marched into an ambuscade. Brant had his men in a semi-circle with the wings ready to close in and surround the entire company.

Captain Patrick received a ball in the thigh and two of his men attempted to carry him back, but all three were killed. Then Brown ordered a retreat, and not a moment too soon, for they would have been cut off. The Colonials fell back, doing their best to delay the enemy until the women and children in the settlement could make their way through the woods to the fort at Schoharie. Four heroic fellows—one account says five—stopped at the George Warner log house and volunteered to hold it until the others could save their families. It was another case of Leonidas and the Spartans at the Pass of Thermopylae. These men put up such a fight that the whole pursuing force was stopped for a while. All of them gave their lives—one was tortured to death—but they succeeded in what they tried to do. Not a woman or a child was killed or captured. The names of two of the men we know—Ferster and Frimire—but the names of

three are unknown. They were "merely regulars" doing their duty. But if ever the overworked word hero was well applied, it was to these five men. Their graves were not marked, and while thousands now pass up and down the valley over the Schohanna Trail within sight of where they lie, no one knows the exact spot. A monument to the dead of this engagement, known and unknown, perhaps some day will be put up. We have a better idea of where the dead Tories and Indians lie. A mulatto who was with them came back after the war and pointed out a little swamp near the road, still to be seen, where about twenty-five, "mostly Indians," were buried.

We have many family traditions about this battle. It was at the home of one great, great, great grandfather, Lawrence Lawyer, that the troops assembled, before the march up the valley. The State School of Agriculture now owns the beautiful hill and creek farm he owned. It was from the log house of a great, great, great, great grandfather, George Warner, a mile farther up the valley, that the fatal advance was made, and it was this house in which the five men laid down their lives. Grandfather Lawyer, a militiaman, carried on his shoulders one of the wounded continental soldiers, Jonas Belknap, out of the fight and "hid him one side." Belknap was almost discovered by two retreating Indians when their dog growled at him, but managed to elude detection and was picked up the next day. Grandmother Lawyer lay out in the woods all night in the rain with her children, and made her way to Schoharie the next day. It was a lively month for my ancestors, for a great grandfather whose name I bear was in the hot fight at Monmouth, "down in Jersey," on the 28th of the same month. In the valley of the Cobleskill and along its main tributary the "West Branch" five of my direct ancestors were

taken prisoner by the Indians before the Revolution ended—two coming back to see to it that I should come along just in the form that I am.

All these traditions make every trip up and down our valley of great significance. And when we go through the gap and on down the Susquehanna we find that the history is all tied up with our history. On July 3, after the Battle of Cobleskill, there was the Wyoming massacre along the Susquehanna in Pennsylvania. The November following was the Cherry Valley massacre. In the year 1779 the Susquehanna was dammed up to float the boats of one section of General John Sullivan's Indian Expedition to chastise the Indians for the black deeds of 1778. The strange rise of the river in midsummer which worked so to the advantage of their foes took all the fight out of the Indians.

In our sixty miles trip to Sidney we passed through Richmondville, East Worcester, Worcester, Schenevus, Maryland, Colliers, Oneonta, Otego, Wells Bridge and Unadilla. Most of these places are villages of from 200 to 600 people. Unadilla and Sidney are larger, Sidney having 5,000 people, and Oneonta is a city of 12,000. In the smaller places there are many people of independent means, retired farmers who have enough to be comfortable partly because their tastes are simple and also because they have gardens and chicken-yards which provide an important part of their living. These farmers are conservative about local improvements and scrutinize the tax rate with care, but just the same these villages present a trim, well kept appearance.

There were many side valleys which we would have liked to explore if there had been time. My brother seemed to know them all.

In Richmondville and in Schenevus we passed the offices of two of the fighting editors of the state—

the editor of the *Richmondville Phoenix* and the editor of the *Schenevus Monitor*. Just how drunk John Jones, prominent citizen, was when he went home, the route he took, the argument he had by his front horse-block and what his wife said when he got in his front door, has been told in the *Monitor* more than once. People in Schenevus it is said walk the straight and narrow way. And yet the editor is a jolly fellow who takes in barrels of apples now and then in payment of arrears on subscriptions. This editor tried parachute jumping from a balloon at one time, but found it tame after editing a country weekly. There are no thrills left for this fellow unless some day he tackles a religious weekly.

CHAPTER IV

ONCE MORE ON THE OLD FRONTIER

IN one comparatively short motor trip we saw five places which were associated with Indian raids, massacres or battles during the American Revolution.

Leaving Cobleskill on the main state road to Binghamton, we soon branched off into the Hyndsville road. Then, across the fields to the left, we saw the scene of the battle of Cobleskill.

Before reaching Hyndsville, in the township of Seward, only five miles from Cobleskill, we passed the old Hynds place. Here lived William Hynds, a great, great, great grandfather. The old farm just across the creek was the scene of a raid where his entire family was captured.

On July 4, 1780, while they were at dinner, seven Indians led by a notorious Tory named Adam Crysler appeared and captured father, mother and six children. Popping the ducks and chickens into sacks, seizing everything in the house they could carry, getting four horses from the barn, they made off and headed for Summit Lake to strike the long trail to Niagara. Four of the little children and the mother died. Mr. Hynds and Henry were released and came back in two and a half years. This was the ten-year-old boy who had to run by the side of the horses all the way to Canada, but who lived to come back and, as an old man, to tell the story to his little granddaughter, who was my own dearly beloved grandmother. So the stories are handed down, not always accurate in details, it may be, but true to the spirit of those dark and bloody times.

Mary Hynds, one of the older children, was kept a prisoner until after the Revolution.

A mile or so beyond Hyndsville, still in the town of Seward, we passed over the brow of the hill where Catherine Merckley was murdered.

On the 18th of October, 1780, following the capture of the Hynds family, eighteen Indians and three Tories led by another Crysler and an Indian named Seth's Henry, visited this Hyndsville-Seward valley again. Michael Merckley, riding home, was shot. Catherine, his niece, was a little way behind. Hearing the shots and seeing the body of her uncle in the road, she put spurs to her horse. A beautiful girl, a daring rider, she disregarded the cries to stop. By a fraction of a second she failed to escape. At the top of the knoll as she was disappearing from view a bullet fired by Seth's Henry cut her down. "I would not have shot her," said the Indian afterward, "if I had known that she was such a pretty paleface." Then the Indians went on to the France farm. To a son of this family Catherine Merckley was engaged. Here an Indian wantonly struck John France, aged fourteen, on the head with his tomahawk. The boy, badly wounded, tried to crawl away. The mother begged for the lives of her other children and her appeal was heeded. That is the surprising thing about all these old Indian stories. One was taken—another was left. Some families were completely wiped out and the buildings burned. Others by the caprice of an individual Tory or Indian were spared. In later years one of the Cryslers boasted that he had hurried to the France home and successfully used his influence to save the family—all but the boy killed before he arrived. In a day when nobody was disposed to say anything good about a loyalist or Tory, this was not accepted, but undoubtedly hundreds of such things happened.

If a man's buildings were left standing when the Indians departed it was immediately whispered by somebody that probably this was done because he was secretly on the side of the enemy and his imprisonment a ruse. But many a well stocked building was left with the idea of looting it later on.

Our drive to-day was through Seward to South Valley in Otsego County, to Roseboom, to the Cherry Valley Creek, where we turned up this beautiful stream to Cherry Valley itself. This was the place we were bound for, as here the sesquicentennial of New York's part in the Revolution was being celebrated. Of that I shall write in some detail.

Leaving Cherry Valley on the Great Western Turnpike and heading east toward home, for several miles we had a succession of wonderful views out over the Mohawk River. At Sharon Center there was a battle July 10, 1781, between Dockstader, a Tory who was on a raid with some four hundred Indians and Tories, and Colonel Marinus Willett with three hundred militia and Continentals. Willett had been at Oriskany in 1777, where the colonists had been drawn into a fatal ambuscade. At Sharon Center he turned the tables and drew the Indians and Tories into a ravine, where they were defeated after a short but bloody engagement. He lost but five men, while the enemy lost over seventy.

Thus in a circle of forty miles without planning to do so we had come upon five different places of historic interest. How many we passed unknowing, who can tell? Just what this part of the country had to face in the Revolution is indicated by the titles of the histories describing these things: "Frontiersmen of New York," "Border Wars," "Border Warfare," etc.

The times that tried men's souls were doubly trying when almost any night the family might be aroused by the shots or whoops of red men.

As New York State celebrates this year the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Oriskany and Saratoga, two of the great decisive battles in the American Revolution, the smaller communities are celebrating these lesser engagements.

There are two contradictory tendencies in small places in regard to their local history. One is to exaggerate the importance of what happened and the other is to fail to see its real significance or how the local affair was tied up with the general struggle.

The State of New York in getting smaller places to join in one general celebration has made the people realize the oneness of the colonists, whether they lived on the frontier or in the cities, whether they served with the Continental troops or with the militia.

At Cherry Valley the celebration took the form of a rodeo, balloon ascensions, parachute drop, a grand parade, an unveiling of markers, a dance, and a historical pageant—the thing of special interest to us.*

Cherry Valley lies ten miles south of the Mohawk, just over the ridge which slopes up from that beautiful stream. The Cherry Valley Creek, which rises a mile from the village, is on a different watershed. It flows down a lovely valley sixteen miles to Milford, where it joins the Susquehanna. One of the nearest points to Cherry Valley on the New York Central Railroad is Fort Plain.

Not until after the American Revolution was there rapid settlement of New York State, except near cities or forts.

Some poor German immigrants called Palatines sent over by Queen Anne early in the eighteenth cen-

---

*At Cobleskill, on August 13, there was an even more successful celebration, when a beautiful pageant was put on in commemoration of the historic events in what is now Schoharie County during the Revolution.

tury, established themselves along the Mohawk and Schoharie Rivers and up the Cobleskill Creek.

Occasionally a wealthy gentleman from the old world, captivated by the beauty of the country and ignorant of the danger, would get a patent far back from the safer settlements. A Scotch gentleman of this type brought about the settlement of Cherry Valley. A Roseboom, a Gansevoort, a Van Schaick and a Lindsay secured a grant of eight thousand acres of land in what is now Cherry Valley, and Lindsay settled on his tract at once. By giving several hundred acres to a clergyman named Samuel Dunlop, he made him an ally. Dunlop, a Scotch-Irishman, went to Londonderry, N. H., where there were other Scotch-Irish, and induced thirty of them to go to Cherry Valley. One of these settlers was a Campbell, and one of my classmates in college was his great, great grandson. He is now a distinguished lawyer in New York. The most readable account of life on the New York frontier, "Border Warfare of New York," was written by W. W. Campbell, a grandson of the old settler.

The pageant to-day showed first the dances of the Iroquois, or Five Nations, who held the Mohawk country and control of what is now New York State. Then came Dunlop and the Scotch-Irish from New Hampshire, most effectively done. The settlement, previously called Lindsay's Bush, had to be named and, true to the history, the pageant showed the gathering where this was decided. From the wild cherry trees from the fruit of which they made their cherry bounce, Cherry Valley took its name.

When the Revolution came thirty out of three hundred souls marched off to join the Continental troops. In 1778, the Sixth Massachusetts was sent up under Colonel Ichabod Alden to guard this exposed post. Dominie Dunlop, attempting to warn

the Boston troops of the dangers of frontier warfare, was rebuffed. All these things made effective incidents. So we came to that terrible morning of the massacre, Nov. 11, 1778. One thing that could not be reproduced in the pageant was the weather. We had a hot July sun beating down on our unprotected heads. The colonists that morning awoke to find four inches of snow, which turned to a cold drizzling rain.

Fort Stanwix a day or two before had sent a warning to Cherry Valley that Joseph Brant, the Mohawk chieftain, and Walter Butler had started in that direction with 800 men. Alden had refused to let the settlers move into the fort, but had sent out scouts who, he said, could keep him advised about the approach of the enemy. This would have been a good scheme had not the astute enemy captured or killed every scout.

So, in the gray of the morning, Butler led his men up the Cherry Valley Creek and suddenly fell on the settlement. The Senecas, the wildest of the Six Nations, led the advance. Colonel Alden, who slept in a farmhouse, ran for the fort as the enemy approached. Called upon to surrender, he refused, turning as he ran to snap his pistol at the Indians. At last a Seneca hurled his tomahawk, struck him down and scalped him, "one of the first victims," as the old records put it, "of this most criminal neglect of duty." The soldiers in the fort could not make a sortie to save the people, and the little hamlet was destroyed, thirty-two of the inhabitants, mainly women and children, were killed, and the houses and other buildings were burned. The Continental troops held the fort against all assaults, sixteen of them being killed. Some of the people took refuge in the fort, some hid under logs or in the woods, some escaped to other settlements on the Mohawk. Between thirty and forty were carried off as prisoners.

Many interesting incidents of the massacre have been handed down, and these were shown in the pageant.

Little Aaron, a chief of the Mohawks, saved the Rev. Samuel Dunlop and his daughter, after his wife had been killed in the first rush of the enemy.

A Tory tried to save the Wells family—very prominent people who were descended from Judge Wells, an old friend of Sir William Johnson, the big man of this country before the Revolution. All were killed except a boy at school in Schenectady. Colonel John Butler, a leading Tory, said afterward: "I would have gone miles on my hands and knees to have saved that family, and why my son did not do it, God only knows."

Brant entered a house where the woman was at her household tasks. "Are you thus engaged while all your neighbors are murdered around you?" said Brant. "We are King's people," she replied. "That plea will not avail you to-day," he answered. "They have murdered Mr. Wells's family, who were as dear to me as my own." "There is one Joseph Brant," said the woman. "If he is with the Indians, he will save us." "I am Joseph Brant; but I have not the command and I know not that I can save you, but I will do what I can." Brant had the woman jump into bed and feign sickness. When the Senecas entered, he told them that there was no one there but a sick woman and her children. When they passed on, Brant went to the door and gave a shrill call, which brought some of his Mohawks hastily to him. "Where is your paint?" said he. "Put my mark on this woman and her children." This was done and they escaped.

As a result of the massacre, Cherry Valley was abandoned for several years. When the Revolution ended and danger of Indian raids was over forever, the town rapidly sprang up again.

Walter Butler, who led the raid, was one of the most cruel and bloodthirsty of men. Before the war ended, he met the fate he had prepared for others. In August, 1781, retreating before Continentals led by Colonel Willett, he crossed the West Canada Creek, fifteen miles from Herkimer, and, as he turned to make a mocking gesture, an Oneida Indian fired and wounded him, and then swam the creek. As the Oneida approached, Butler begged for quarter, but the Indian tomahawked him with the cry, "Remember Cherry Valley."

The pageant closed with other brighter scenes—the visit of General Washington in 1783 and the opening of the pike to Albany, fifty miles away, in 1799.

One of the citizens of Cherry Valley named Abraham B. Cox wrote the pageant and the songs. It was remarkably true to the facts and cleverly done. To put it on he induced the committee to send to New York for the best pageant director they could find.

Descendants of the early settlers and people who came later, citizens of Richfield Springs, Roseboom, Cooperstown, Springfield and of Cherry Valley helped in the impersonations.

It was a great success. Fully five thousand people gathered to see it. It brought back almost forgotten chapters of history. It testified to the high ability to be found in many of our small communities to-day.

Cobleskill, August, 1927.

CHAPTER V

APPLES FROM HOME

IT adds much to the pleasure of eating to know where the things we eat come from. It is all very well for Tark-Pilford and Co. or S. S. Bierce to have fancy labels put on their goods conveying the information that they are packed "expressly" and "exclusively," but I prefer to read "Orlando, Florida," on my guava jelly, or "Houston, Texas," on my figs, or "Delmonte," on my canned apricots. There is a new interest when we know the canned corn is put up by Doe of Farmington, Maine, or the maple honey is from Roe of Rutland, Vermont.

Recently we have been fortunate in having several things sent us which have filled the city apartment with country atmosphere while we ate them and made absent ones seem very near.

The prunes from the Santa Clara Valley, California, began it. The postman delivered a big box while we were at dinner. We put some to soak that night and had them the next night. They were not as enormous as some we have had, but they were of good size, all plumped out and tender from the long, slow cooking, and ready to "melt in the mouth." What were "boarding house" or "boarding school prunes" that people made such jokes about them? The prunes that I have known have been a wonderful addition to the menu. It must have been in the cooking that the trouble came. Slatternly, slovenly, people must have got hold of them. Nobody is fit to cook prunes who does not respect them and give them time to draw back the moisture the evaporator had to take out. When we ate our prunes we said to one

another, "We are eating the soil and sunshine of Los Gatos." We saw again the ranch upon the hills at the foot of the mountains, the toyon bushes on the mountain road, the miles of fruit trees in every direction, Mount Wilson over across the valley, the dear cousins who opened their little country house early in the season expressly for us. So wonderful are some of the photographs we have seen of a prune ranch in full blossom that at times we mix memories, and claim to have actually seen that great flowering, but that still is ahead of us. We are especially fond of canned apricots, and at Los Gatos, not far from Stanford University, we saw both prunes and apricots growing. When one eats prunes from Los Gatos one remembers the birds in the trees, the Japanese farmer who was cultivating the soil, the well where we drew water, the wind that blew up from the cool depths of the ravine, the limitless sunshine. The difference between "eating" and "feeding" is in the seeing visions and dreaming dreams.

Our minister in Oakland last year went for a rest to a beautiful, remote, place in California called Indio. And from there he sent us dates—"Indio dates to be eaten with the coffee in the morning," and if one can let their sweet take the place of sugar in the coffee so much the better. It made the morning coffee a kind of communion service. Probably the communion when it was instituted was as simple and natural a thing as was our thinking of our absent friends when we took food which brought them to mind.

Date palms have been planted all through our great Southwest, under the auspices of the United States Department of Agriculture, and the Coachella Valley and the Imperial Valley, California, Tempe and Yuma, Arizona, where they already are bearing fruit, may become as famous for dates as Mesopotamia, Egypt and Northern Africa. At any rate, a

date with dinner opens up many delightful lines of conversation.

Every section of the country has its own special products with which the people grow up, and which they take as a matter of course until they go away, and then these things associated with the old home take on new meaning. In Pitt County, North Carolina, they "set great store" by scoppernong grapes, a variety of the fox grape with an Indian name, and have made scoppernong wine. Other parts of the South have these grapes, but I am interested in Pitt County, N. C., because one of our friends in Washington, D. C., who was born there, always shares her treasures with us—preserved fresh figs, ginger pears, and the fruit of the vine.

There is something oriental or biblical about the fig, even if grown in North Carolina. It is one of the oldest foods of the race and one of the best. Now when we have figs we think not only of Smyrna, but of Rocky Mount and of Pitt County—not only of long caravans and sheiks of the desert, and the three wise men, but of Universalists of to-day who share with their friends the products of their soil.

Maple sugar and maple syrup, so intimately connected with life in Canada and the northern part of the United States, and made in such quantities in New York and Vermont, have a peculiar ability to call back the scenes of the past. Once each year, the sons and daughters of Vermont who live in Washington, D. C., get together for an old-fashioned "sugaring off," with sugar direct from their home state. Sometimes the Governor of the state goes to Washington with the sugar.

A few may grow tired of the sweet as they get older—or unable to eat much of it—but they never tire of the reunion or the memories it invokes. Senators, Representatives, Judges of the Supreme Court,

clerks and housekeepers sit down together. The older ones talk about the sugar bush, or orchard, going into the woods while snow is still on the ground, making the rounds of the trees that have been tapped to gather up the sap, the big shallow pans with woodfires under them where it is boiled down, the all day and all night activity until the sap stops running, accidents, boiling over, "fires in the shack," and "the grand sugaring off afterward." Many a man who never buys more than ten cents worth of maple sugar a year gets ten dollars worth of fun out of it "remembering."

In Boston, for many years, there lived a fine old couple from Chester County, Pennsylvania, picked up and transplanted because a daughter was on the faculty of one of the schools and they wanted to be near her. Once I was invited to dinner there to have some "Philadelphia scrapple" from home. The scrapple, I believe, is a mixture of pork scraps, hogs' livers and kidneys, boiled with corn meal and jellied, sliced and fried. It is not half bad. But what it is or is not is beside the mark compared with the talk it released—of Kennett Square, Bayard Taylor, who was a cousin of our hostess, his "Views Afoot" and his "Story of Kennett."

There is an important cog in our church in Alabama who sends to our Boston Headquarters after the harvest a large box of paper-shelled pecans of gigantic size. They come on with the dessert at many a dinner table in Greater Boston, bringing up memories of the donor and of her bountiful Southern hospitality.

For the deeper thoughts of auld lang syne, however, for choicest memories invoked by food, we who were born in the northern and eastern part of the United States must pay our tribute to the apple.

Only lately the State Superintendent of Universalist Churches in Massachusetts stood in the

book room at Universalist Headquarters and delivered a eulogy upon the "Rambo" apple grown in all its beauty and perfection in the place in Ohio where he was born.

The manager of the Publishing House came in that same day with his green bag stuffed with "wealthy" apples, which he happened to see, and which he passed around. "Like the Bartlett pear," he said they were. "Good—perhaps no other kind as good—but good only about fifteen minutes." He used to have them up in New Hampshire.

This brought our chief of staff, a Vermont woman, to the front with the story of the Bethel apple—grown "only around Bethel." It seems that one of the early settlers back in the eighteenth century, moving up the Connecticut, stopped at a cider mill and picked up an apple which was so delicious that he saved the seeds and planted them, and from that tree all the "Bethel" apple trees have come.

The day before Thanksgiving Day this year a younger brother drove over from the old home town in New York State with his car full—wife, children, canned fruit, jelly, maple sugar and apples, both from the garden of the village home and from the young trees we had planted the first year we visited the little hill farm.

Only those away from home who have had boxes or barrels or parcel post packages put up by the home folks can realize what such gifts mean. The things are delicious in themselves, but memory, association, love and longing give to them a flavor or color which is more than physical. They are not just so many molecules or calories, they are symbols of the things we love the best.

These apples which my brother brought had nothing to do with my childhood. They were "MacIntosh reds," "delicious," "yellow banana," varieties

which have come up since my day at home. But they are grown at home now, the "MacIntosh" in the garden where the old "northern spy" tree stood, the "delicious" and the "banana" up at the farm where we have had so many happy times since we grew up.

There is nothing better in the way of an apple than the MacIntosh. It is good for pie, for apple sauce, or to eat out of the hand. But it is simply a revised and improved edition of the old snow apple of childhood—the tiny dark red apples with white, tender, juicy flesh.

Although they were of a later generation of trees, these apples came from home, and when one ate them one saw the garden again as it was forty years ago. With a path down the middle of the lot, it stretched back several hundred yards. Along the garden path were the plum tree, the early pear, the seckel, Sheldon and Flemish beauty pears, the sourbough, the Baldwin, "the big red apple," the Hubbardston nonesuch, the northern spy and the Esopus Spitzenberg. All are gone but the Baldwin tree, as are the men who came in by the day to plow or hoe or spade, and the father who so loved the garden and taught us to love it. There are other trees around the lot which seem to have replanted themselves, green gage plums, which at one time threatened to drive out everything else, damsons and cherries, some of which probably are the old trees of my childhood, butternuts of a new generation, grape vines and currant bushes, which never have been replanted.

In a garden which is a little too big to take care of there are bits of the wilderness, corners that have heard the call of the wild. Father did not take much pride in such green hidden retreats, but we who have no gardening reputations to lose, love them. In a tangle of blackberries, I always think of how the catbirds came to talk to mother while she was out there

alone picking the big pans of berries that she put into jelly and preserves.

Father would have made a great farmer. He had an instinctive love of the soil. There was nothing he liked better than to get out of his law office into his garden. He knew all about how things should be planted, and how trees should be trimmed. He gave his boys and his girl a love of the garden which has never left them. All six of them find pleasure in growing things. There are over 5,000 varieties of apples listed in the Department of Agriculture in Washington, and sometimes I think my brother George knows them all. There is a deep satisfaction in being able to give a name to things. We owe to father the feeling that it is worth while to know.

"Down in the garden." There were many things that the phrase expressed in our family. If mother was there she might be picking berries or getting vegetables, but mother never dug in the garden. Once in a while she would take hold of a tall weed and give it a pull, but she was no gardener. None of her own folks were. But if mother was out in the garden, it might mean that it was one of the rare occasions when she just had to get away—that the load was too heavy, the worry too great, and in the garden it left her. The healing of the garden—perhaps a compound of air, sunshine, earthy smells, rest, change, God, perhaps something else—it was real healing, the true balm of Gilead.

There is no use in being melancholy about the inevitable changes of the years—the passing of people, the passing of trees, the passing of old homes. They can not pass as long as we treasure them in our minds.

CHAPTER VI

THE STUDY OF TREES

TAKING up more systematically the study of trees recently, I have been impressed by four things: That I know almost nothing about them, that the study is fascinating, that there is no phase of nature which can be so steadily studied twelve months of the year, and that the material is inexhaustible and close at hand.

The great majority of country boys know about trees. City and village boys usually do not. Nature study in the grade schools is changing this situation somewhat, but knowledge of trees is still rather limited. The country boys know trees not in their orders or genera but as related to firewood and lumber. I have often been astonished at the quickness and ease with which they identify our common trees.

My own knowledge of trees, of course, for some years was limited to the village where I was born. The trees on the home place I came to know intimately. There were sugar maples between us and the neighbors on each side—old trees on the south, young trees that father set out on the north. There was also a soft maple which he set by the wall and which now has attained great size. This tree also is known as the "silver," the "white" or the "river" maple. We had a mountain ash, two large horse chestnuts on each side of the walk going up to the front door, one still alive but in extreme old age, an elm which replaced one of the maples, butternut trees and a great variety of fruit trees in the garden.

At grandmother's down the street a little way off there were different ornamental trees—white

birch (the weeping form), one or two long-leafed pines, and two or three cedars, besides many rare vines and fruit trees.

At the other grandparents', eight miles away, there were dense woods, where we looked for sweet acorns and beechnuts—always with the warning to stay close to the road and not get lost—a hickory in the garden pointed out as "the one father planted when he was a little boy," and on the way to this grandfather's house a row of poplars we always watched for.

Father, country bred, knew the trees. He could recognize them far off by their shape or manner of growth, or by the color of branch or leaf, and he often would call our attention to this tree or that one as being "perfect," or "very old," or "beautiful." And he tried to make us call them by name.

When we drove with him, however, we were at an age when we were more interested in what trees produced than in the family to which they belonged. We frequently did beg father to drive out of his way so we could pass "the two trees stuck together," two pines, perhaps a foot apart, united ten or twelve feet from the ground by an odd wooden ligament slanting up from one to the other.

At least two of us did little observing until we were eleven years old, when the family realized how near-sighted we were and had us fitted with glasses.

In those happy far-off days, I made a beginning in identification of trees, but I have been surprised every little while by the things I did not learn about the trees I knew best. Years later, when I entered a beautiful dining room in New Jersey, I was told that the combination of wood in which it was finished was white and black walnut. Then and there I learned that white walnut was butternut. So on a trip west I found out that the "Ohio buckeye" and

the "sweet buckeye" were cousins of my beloved horse chestnut. As I began to see the gardens and lawns of wealthy people and to visit the parks, I learned that some people called our maple the "sugar maple," the "rock maple," or the "hard maple," and that there was a whole company of other maples, "red," "Norway," "mountain," "striped," etc.

I had no high opinion of ash trees because our ash tree dropped its berries on the front walk, where they were trodden into such a mess that father finally had it cut down, and I never dreamed that there were black and brown or red and white and green ash trees, and that our mountain ash really was not an ash but belonged to an entirely different family—being a cousin of the apple and pear.

By the well of one of our neighbors stood a large basswood, and we used to run over to hear the bees humming when it was in bloom, and we played with the little round seeds, making them dance upon pipe stems, but no one told us that this was the "linden," or the "whitewood," or the "bee tree."

In the red-hot Presidential elections of the late seventies and early eighties both Democrats and Republicans put up campaign poles—the Democrats always using hickory, the Republicans any straight tree they could conveniently get. Many a hot argument did we little boys have over the respective merits of the poles. But I never got to know the hickory well. We used the localism "walnut" for the fruit of the hickory tree. "Shagbark" and "shellbark," the true names for the common hickories, we seldom heard. Father would quickly differentiate and say, "shagbark," or "pignut," or "bitternut," or "mockernut," but with us the study stopped there. One of my assistants often points out how growing up we were apt to take the most familiar natural object for granted—as much a part of the scheme of things as

the front horse-block and as little investigated. It was that way with the trees of my native village.

When the first Colorado blue spruce was introduced that was an event. That was something out of the ordinary. But the laboratory we had close at hand for the study of nature we did not appreciate.

Knowledge of trees has come slowly and accidentally. I have had my introduction to some trees so deeply impressed on my mind that I never can forget them. Along the walk leading to Union College, Schenectady, there were very large old black walnut trees, the first black walnut I ever saw that was not in a bedstead or a bureau. Going to Kansas to teach, and tramping cross country, I tried to dash through a hedge, and then and there learned that the Osage orange, or bowwood, is not to be penetrated by direct attack, but to be treated gently and circumspectly. In that was its value in the days before Middle West farmers were able to have fences. No animal or boy or man ever tries twice to break through an Osage orange thicket. He goes around.

In Washington, D. C., one could not help noticing the magnolias all over the city, and especially in the little parks and the grounds around public buildings, or the gingko trees, one of which stood in the yard of a neighbor on Massachusetts Avenue.

When a July storm blew down over two thousand trees in the Federal City, we made some inquiry as to what kind they were.

When we drove or rode or tramped in Rock Creek Park, we picked up scraps of information, but there was no real scrutiny of trees.

The magnolia in Franklin Park, the avenue of horse chestnut trees on Thirteenth Street, and later the Japanese cherry trees, attracted thousands of visitors when they were in blossom.

The country around Washington is especially rich in oak and scrub pine. Coming back from a picnic at Great Falls, with our one really remarkable naturalist in the parish, I thought I would collect a few oak leaves and begin to identify them, but under his enthusiastic guidance they followed in such quick succession that I was utterly bewildered: Chinquapin, post, red, black, yellow, rock, scarlet, scrub, white, willow, pin—I can not even remember the names.

One needs a manual or guide. Fortunately many are now available. The great authority I suppose is "The Manual of the Trees of North America," by the late Prof. Charles Sprague Sargent. Another beautiful book which has been of help to me is "Our Trees and How to Know Them," a collection of admirable photographs by Arthur I. Emerson, with descriptions by Prof. Clarence M. Weed, of one of the Massachusetts State Normal Schools. The photographs are large enough to give one a clear idea. An interesting book which the Madame studied long before I took up the trees is "Getting Acquainted with the Trees," by J. Horace MacFarland of Harrisburg, Pa., now available only in the libraries. Then there is Cheney's "What Tree Is That?" "A Guide to the Trees," by Alice Lounsberry, who wrote "A Guide to Wild Flowers," a much cheaper, simpler book, "A Guide to the Trees," by Prof. C. C. Curtis of Columbia, and many others. Schuyler Matthews, who has written one of the "bibles" of the bird devotees, has written two books on trees: "Field Book of American Trees and Shrubs," and "Familiar Trees and Their Leaves."

A great difference between the study of birds and the study of trees or flowers is obvious—one stays put and the other does not. After dealing for weeks with some elusive bird which only shows himself for a fraction of a second and then presents only

his off side to you, there is relief in studying something as solid, immovable, constant, and always available as a tree.

One of the books which started me again in the study is "Trees in Winter," by Blakeslee and Jarvis. Dr. Blakeslee is assistant director of the Carnegie Station for Experimental Evolution at Cold Spring Harbor, L. I., and Dr. Jarvis formerly was connected with the Connecticut State Agricultural Experiment Station and the National Research Council. Part of this book dealing with the identification was issued first in bulletin form, and the great demand for it is an illustration of a new interest in this part of botany.

The authors tell us that in the winter when other forms of nature study are suspended, one can go straight ahead with the study of trees, that only when trees are bare and clearly outlined against the sky does one get their essential characteristics.

"Winter is the best time in which to acquire this ability to recognize trees at a distance," says the book. "They are individually more conspicuous at this season. Try watching them from a car window in their winter aspect and you will be surprised how many can be thus recognized after a little practise. A tree in winter is far from being the characterless object many believe. Freed from its covering of leaves, the skeleton of the tree is revealed, and with the method of branching thus clearly discernible the species may generally be more readily identified at a distance than when in its summer garb. There are many forms, moreover, that are difficult to distinguish by summer features alone, but which in winter have twig, bud and other characters which make their separation comparatively easy."

All winter I had found myself watching the bare trees with more attention, noticing their individuality brought out by the absence of leaves,

and the resemblances and the differences in trees of a single species.

Living where there are many elm trees, I amused myself classifying them as Blakeslee and Jarvis do in their description of the white elm (also known as the American or water elm). "In respect to its general outline various types of the elm have been distinguished as the 'vase form;' the 'umbrella form,' with trunk undivided to near the top with abruptly spreading branches, forming a broad shallow arch; the 'plume form,' with a one-sided development of drooping branches from a tall trunk; the 'oak form,' with more tortuous and less arching limbs forming a wide, rounded head; the 'feathered form,' a modification of any of the other types with the trunk fringed with short branches."

In Boston, if anywhere in the world, one ought to take an interest in trees. A northern and a southern flora meet here. Nature is rich in species. The Metropolitan Parking System runs for miles in every direction around the city and is well wooded, both through the work of nature and of man.

The Boston Public Garden is a convenient place in which to study trees, nearly all of which here are marked. Pedagogically this is unsound. Practically it is a great comfort. Sometimes looking at the sign, "Ulmus campestris L., English Elm," or "Acer platanoids L., Norway Maple," both of which are numerous in the Garden or on the Common, I feel as I did the one time in my honest youth I was induced to use a "trot," or "pony," or translation, to help on the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of the first book of Caesar. Our teachers in those days bore down hard on "trots," making us realize, what life since has confirmed, that only those things really count and stick that one works out for himself.

No single influence in Boston, or in the country

for that matter, has done more to make men take seriously the study of trees than the "Arnold Arboretum," which is practically the same as saying, "the life of Charles Sprague Sargent." Only recently I heard Dallas Lore Sharp describe rather whimsically the trouble he had getting John Burroughs past the "Arboretum" on his way to a dinner engagement twenty miles away. "It is the one place I have been wanting to study all my life," said Burroughs. His attitude was typical of the feeling of the informed everywhere. The Arnold Arboretum, a department of Harvard University, has made thousands realize how rich the world is in trees and woody shrubs, how marvelously beautiful they are, how important economically, how priceless esthetically, and what a source of inspiration to letters.

Friends of the Arboretum have passed the three-quarters mark in their effort to raise a million dollar endowment fund as a memorial for Professor Sargent.

Cato began the study of Greek at eighty, and we may begin the study of trees at forty, fifty, sixty, or as long as we can toddle about.

If our attainments never add to the sum total of human knowledge they may add to the sum total spread abroad in the world. Our example may start some of the younger ones who may really have careers ahead of them in botany. We may learn comparatively little compared with what there is to know, but that little will enlarge our horizon and make life sweeter. We shall have a relief in sorrow and anxiety. It is the man with only one string to his bow who caves in and jumps off the ferry-boat. And we shall be better citizens. We shall never have to be classified with those who are indifferent to the needless slaughter of our trees and the desecration of our beauty spots.

So let us begin: "Bark, Berry, Bloom," "Habit, Habitat, Head," "Needle, Node, Nut," "Quercus, Fagus, Pinus, Ulmus"—the terms may scare us a little in the beginning, but they are not as hard as they sound. "Study the cases," said old Judge Yeomans to me, a mere boy in my father's law office, "and principles will stick to your mind like beechnuts to the ribs of a hog."

CHAPTER VII

GETTING TO KNOW THE MAPLES

BACK in the old home town, people as long as I can remember have taken great pride in their lawns and shade trees. There is a double row along each side of the streets. In the main street, in the little park in the center of the village, and here and there in other places, there are a few large elms, and on the lawns various conifers, but the great majority of the trees are sugar maples. The soil and climate seem adapted to them, and in the older parts of the village they have attained great size. When we were children maple to us meant sugar maple and nothing else. Every spring farmers came to the door with maple sugar, maple syrup and maple honey, and in those days we had not the slightest comprehension of the vast difference, both in taste and wholesomeness, between this maple sugar and the syrups which began to appear on the market. In fact something persisted of the earlier idea of "white sugar for company and brown sugar for every day." In my day we always had white sugar on the table, but I well remember that to my grandmother on my father's side, maple sugar was rather common, and white sugar luxurious.

I recall the excitement among the children in our family when an old bachelor neighbor first tapped the trees between his house and ours, the eager anticipation with which I ran to get a drink of the sap and my speedy disillusionment. It was a different thing later when his old mother called me over to get a saucer of sugar and showed me how to make "kany" —maple syrup boiled down enough so as to harden

SHANKS MOUNTAIN, COBLESKILL, N. Y.

From the roof of the old home

instantly into a delicious sweet when thrown on snow. Mother too "boiled down" sap from our own trees a few times, but this was only an imitation of a real "sap bush." One had to go to the farms where sugar and syrup were made on a larger scale to catch the real picturesqueness of this most typical pioneer scene. Snow often lay deep in the woods. Though the sun shone warm by day, the frosts were nipping at night. When trees were once tapped and the sap began to trickle out, the job kept up twenty-four hours a day until the making of the syrup was over. By means of little wooden or iron spiles driven into the tree the sap made its way into buckets. Twice each day the buckets had to be emptied into great receptacles on sleighs hauled by horses, and then it was carried to the camp of the sugar makers and set to boiling in shallow pans over wood fires. To keep fires going, to add sap as it boiled down, to see that it did not boil over as it thickened, to take it off at the right stage, was a man's-sized job. There were famous sugar makers in the country then. There must be still, for the same delicious product comes to us year after year.

Speaking of changes that have come over the industry, Maud Going* writes: "In the old days warm flickering lights played over the snow, the lilac gray boles of the maples, and the busy workers who stirred the syrup and fed the flames. But to-day a patent evaporator over a bricked-in oven does the work in a scientific, economical and thoroughly prosaic way." She also tells us an Indian tradition showing that the Indian realized the moral significance of work.

Nokomis, the earth, was the first maker of maple sugar. Her grandson Manabush, the demigod, saw

*"With the Trees." Maud Going.

the buckets filling with delicious thick syrup. "This will not do, my grandmother," he said. "The people will not have any work if they make sugar so easily; they must cut wood and boil the syrup for several nights to keep them occupied that they may not form bad habits." So Manabush climbed to the top of a maple and scattered water all over it like rain, so that the sugar should dissolve and flow from the tree as sap. That is why it is such a task to make sugar. It comes close to our Christian theory of the dignity of work—our belief that a good God ordained that we should be laborers with Him in producing maple sugar and every other good thing for the service of man.

I remember the day when maple came to mean something more than sugar maples. A man came to our back door with a small tree, and father directed him to set it near the well. It was a silver or soft maple. Long years later I learned that some people call it the white maple—from the lighter color of the under side of the leaf. This tree was a great curiosity to us, but we held it in small esteem after it grew large enough to tap and we found the sugar so inferior in flavor. Now breast high it has a circumference of six feet ten inches. The sugar maple near it has a circumference of seven feet.

How many years we wait to find out some of the simplest, commonest things of every-day life.

For example, that these sugar maples under which I grew up and which I loved bore two other names, rock maple and hard maple; that birds'-eye maple and curly maple, so highly prized years ago by the cabinet maker, are accidental forms of the sugar maple; that the maple which is so red in the spring-time is a different variety, *viz.*, the red or swamp maple; that in the woods in which I tramped almost every week there may be found the mountain maple,

the ash-leaved maple or box elder, the striped maple, or moosewood; that we have also imported maples, the sycamore maple, the Norway maple, and Japanese maples; and that even in the depth of winter there are ways of telling one maple from another, and any one tree from any other one, by the buds, scars, bark and habit of the tree.

The old saying, "Knowledge is power," can be amended to read, "Knowledge is both power and delight." My tramps are much more interesting since I have started to identify the trees. In the old home garden I was surprised to find a maple that did not look quite like the great sugar maples on the lawn. Breaking off a leaf the white juice oozed out as in the milkweed, and I knew that it was the Norway maple, of which we have thousands along the streets and on the lawns of Washington and Boston.

On the margins of the ponds and trout brooks of New England and New York and in the under woods of the mountains, we find the "mountain maple"—more often a bush than a tree, but reaching a height of twenty or twenty-five feet. It is a beautiful little tree, and several of the writers on trees, notably Clarence M. Weed of Lowell, express surprise that it is not more largely used in landscape gardening. The fruits are red in summer, the leaves turn a beautiful red in autumn, and the smaller twigs are red in winter. "At all seasons," says Professor Weed, "it furnishes beautiful coloring. It is eminently hardy and is not likely to grow too high for effective use among shrubbery."

Up at the little hill farm this year I had an amusing experience finding the mountain maple. After dinner one night the Madame and I walked down the road to a wood which we pass coming up, and I studied every maple along the edge without finding the tree I sought. The walk was not without

its reward, for the wood thrush and the scarlet tanager, which we had not seen at the farm before this year, sang for us. At breakfast the next morning, however, I glanced out of the window and there in a corner between the main part of the house and the ell stood a beautiful little mountain maple three or four feet high. While it was a side of the house where we seldom went, the failure to observe it before was none the less funny. After this introduction I found the beautiful little tree almost everywhere I walked.

The most talked of tree on the farm as long as we have owned it is "the old sugar maple." The woods on the place are full of sugar maples, but no one is in doubt when we speak of *the* sugar maple. It stands by itself in the steep hill pasture, and is a landmark for miles around. It probably is the oldest tree on the place. Blakeslee and Jarvis say that sugar maples are from two to five feet in circumference. I measured this one three feet from the ground on the upper side, and six feet above ground on the lower side. It has a circumference of thirteen feet two inches. One of the limbs which I could reach had a circumference of three feet two inches, and another limb five and one-half feet. Fourteen or fifteen years ago in a severe storm the main trunk broke off about half way up and came down, carrying several big limbs with it. The place was too steep, the lumber too heavy, and labor too scarce, to do anything with it, and that beautiful wood has lain there all these years, rotting away. The other limbs have grown out so that the tree has regained its symmetrical shape.

Once in a while the boys of the family go up to the old sugar maple for a camp dinner. There are stones for an oven, fuel in abundance, a cool breeze, dense shade on the hottest day, and a lovely distant

view. Something is lost out of the summer in which I do not have at least one meal under the old sugar maple. Something is wrong in the arrangement when that meal does not include beefsteak and coffee. Cake is good, candy is good, lettuce and mayonnaise sandwiches are good, but all seem out of place on the rugged hillside under the wide spreading branches of the old sugar maple.

Corn bread would fit up there, beans would fit, hard tack would fit, but fancy foods interject a discordant note in such a place. A chunk of maple sugar is as far as one ought to go in the way of dessert.

Beauchamp in his "Indian Names in New York," tells us that the Indians called the sugar maple "Ho-whah-tah," but this is one of the words whose primary meaning in the Indian tongue he could not find out. Nearly all of their names carry a bit of description. It would be strange if this did not. The Indian word for red maple is "new growth red," for the canoe birch "birch which makes canoes," for iron wood "everlasting wood," for chestnut "prickly bur," for basswood (ho-ho-sa) "it peels," and for pine (oneh-tah) "like porcupines holding to a stick." Nowhere is the saying that "single words carry history" more true than in the Indian tongue.

During the World War citizens of the United States became better acquainted with Canada and the Canadians—glorious fellows with a great record in the war. Many of us learned for the first time that the leaf of the sugar maple is the national emblem of Canada. Canadians could have made no better choice. There are thousands of miles of maple forest in Canada and the great trees are servants of the state and beautify it as well.

Many people take their vacations in the autumn and go to northern New England and Canada to see the maples in the glory of autumn coloring.

Alexander Muir wrote Canada's National Anthem, "The Maple Leaf Forever," thirty-two lines and a chorus, full of love of country, but of a love that is broad and fine as the great forests. There is nothing exclusive about it. It carries thought for the whole British Empire:

> Here may it wave our boast, our pride,
> And joined in love together,
> The thistle, shamrock, rose entwine,
> The maple leaf forever.

John Coleman Adams, to whose beautiful book, "Nature Studies in Berkshire," I have referred, closes his chapter, "Under the Maples," with this noble paragraph:

"Happy those mortals who can build their homes and do their work and think their thoughts and bear the great experiences of life under such shades as these, which bring something of the voices and the spirit of the forest shades down to the roadside and close to the cottage threshold. Thrice blessed the man who beneath their gracious arms finds rest, healing, and new courage, after the battle of a year's toil."

The last book of John Burroughs is "Under the Maples." It consists of a collection of essays written "while sitting in his hay-barn study in the Catskills, and looking out on the maple woods of the old home farm, and under the maples at Riverby."

Wintering in California in 1921, his thoughts turned often to the Catskills and the Hudson. His great desire was to get home. Sorting and sifting the essays for the new book, he was searching for a title. March came, the last month of his life, bringing its memories of maple trees and dripping sap. One day he suddenly exclaimed: "I have it. We'll call it 'Under the Maples.'" Clara Barrus, his biographer,

says: "His love for the maple and consequently his pleasure at having hit upon this title can be gathered from the following fragment found among his miscellaneous notes: 'I always feel at home where the sugar maple grows. It was paramount in the woods of the old home farm where I grew up. It looks and smells like home. When I bring in a maple stick to put on my fire I feel like caressing it a little. Its fiber is as white as a lily and nearly as sweet-scented. It is such a tractable, satisfactory wood to handle—a clean, docile, wholesome tree, burning without snapping or sputtering, easily worked up into stove wood, fine of grain, hard of texture, stately as a forest tree, comely and clean as a shade tree, glorious in autumn, a fountain of coolness in summer, sugar in its veins, gold in its foliage, warmth in its fibers and health in it the year round.' "

CHAPTER VIII

A FEW DAYS OFF

EDITORS of religious weeklies have to sandwich their vacations in at week ends and over holidays, unless they bring in understudies and go off altogether. It has not been practicable for us to go off for the last four summers, but we have learned to catch rest when we can and to make it count.

It is all very well to advise a man to forget his work altogether on vacation, but if he has the most delightful work in the world, will he want to forget it? An artist just can't help setting up his easel when he gets down into the Aroostook country of Maine. A poet must perforce pull out an old envelope and write his best lines when his "heart leaps up" as he beholds "the rainbow in the sky." A musician picks up the old fiddle and draws the bow lovingly across the strings when he comes to some especially delightful hour in the holiday. So we who love to write are not marring our rest as we sit back in an easy chair and visit a bit with the thousands who week after week cruise with us.

In fact it may be that our best appraisal of the things that go on in our offices may come to us as we look back at them from the train, or the boat, or the distant farmhouse.

It is no great hardship not to go off to Europe or around the world if instead one can go off for a few days to the "Little Hill Farm." That is what we are in a fair way of doing.

It seemed good to go across the Old Bay State once again by daylight. The Boston and Albany has a new train for Chicago called the North Shore Limited,

which leaves Boston at 10.30 daylight saving time. It enabled me to clean up the morning's mail, clean up half a dozen things of the type that one won't do unless he is going off and reflects that he may not come back, and yet get away from the office in the middle of the forenoon with the comfortable feeling that one has done a full day's work.

The proud North Shore Limited was forced to stop in a swamp east of Palmer because of the signals, long enough for me to realize anew how interesting a place a swamp is. Flowers bloom there which are not found in the uplands. Birds love the swampy places. Mystery broods over a swamp. Many are the tales connected with swamps which come down from the French and Indian War and the American Revolution.

Back of us sat a civil engineer, with his wife and three little girls. After twenty years in Boston, this family, originally Canadian, are moving to Lockport. The children were watching eagerly for the New York line.

An elderly gentleman addressed me as we got out at Pittsfield to stretch our legs, and made some remark about the laurel in the woods between Worcester and Springfield. I replied with praise of the laurel in the Arnold Arboretum, and that was "the beginning of a beautiful friendship," for he loves the Arboretum.

When he asked if I was starting off for all summer I told him that I was an editor and had to stay on the job. That led to the disclosure that for over thirty years he has been in charge of the subscription list of the *Christian Endeavor World*, and is a close friend of my dear friend, Dr. Amos R. Wells, the editor, that he was starting for a tour of practically all of our National Parks, accompanied by his brother-in-law, a physician of Georgetown, Mass., and that the first stop

was to be at the Christian Endeavor Convention in Cleveland, for which my friend Wells had started in his automobile.

So the six-hour trip across Massachusetts and eastern New York brought a succession of delightful incidents. The sun came out to shine on the Berkshire Hills, and I heard one loyal old citizen of Massachusetts remark that probably in a tour of the whole country he would find nothing to surpass the Berkshire Hills for quiet beauty.

The last half hour before reaching Albany has an especial thrill to me, for the B. & A. reaches the top of the ridge east of the Hudson several miles down the river, and then makes a long slanting descent to join the New York Central tracks at East Albany. On this section of the road there are beautiful views of the Catskill Mountains a few miles to the south, of the rich Hudson Valley, and of the capital city of New York State.

Over the ridge west of the Hudson Valley and through the gap made by the Normanskill we were climbing a few minutes later, having made a close connection for Cobleskill. That trip I have described so often that I dare not repeat it. And yet I might do so, for it is always new.

Saturday, Sunday and Monday we spent in the old home, where the youngest brother of the family keeps up the oldest traditions of the family. If the old folks could come back they would still feel at home in the old place. In this rapidly moving world where the scene shifts every day or so, it is something of an achievement to keep the atmosphere of an old home.

Saturday I went off by myself, too tired to talk—not really fit company for anybody. But late on Saturday I took an old Ford and drove the Madame a mile east of the village to investigate something I had

seen from the train the day before. I had discovered a spot where bank swallows by the hundred make their home, along the Cobleskill Creek. The bank of the stream, twelve or fifteen feet high at one point, was honeycombed with their dwellings. Scores of them were skimming over the water and darting above our heads catching insects. The Madame had never seen such a sight, but to me it was as much a part of life as the old swimming hole. Bank swallows, cliff swallows, tree swallows, barn swallows—we have them all around Cobleskill, but I had to live over fifty years before I could even begin to tell one from another or to tell swallows from chimney swifts.

Along the edge of the stream, feeding, there were a number of the killdees, the best known of all the plovers. They flew up now and then, uttering the plaintive sound "killdee, killdee," which gives them their name. Like a partridge, this bird feigns lameness as one approaches its nest and seeks to draw the intruder away.

Sunday I got up and made ready to go to church. And here is a plain, truthful recital of the facts to buttress my alibi for not going.

It was 4 a. m., and the sun was just rising. The Old South Mountain, or Donats, was calling. Said I: "I will go to the 'Depot Restaurant,' get hot coffee, toast and oatmeal, spend a little time on the mountain and be back before the family is up." That was a good plan, and it all worked out right except that I did not get back to church. I was sorry about this in one way, because, whether I want to go or not, I try to make my example count for church-going. I was glad in another way, because my failure was not altogether my fault. Whoever sent a perfect Sunday morning was an accessory before the fact.

Nobody was up in the village except two boys eating doughnuts in the restaurant. Yes, dear New

Englanders, we have doughnuts and pie and baked beans and fish cakes over in New York State too, and much more besides, but not all at one time.

Going south, I soon left the village and crossed the Cobleskill Creek. Here I lost time too. There were more bank swallows and killdees, a big old grackle taking a bath, a Maryland yellow-throat in the bushes, many interesting things to watch from the bridge.

The climb starts only half a mile farther on. Though steep it is only about seven hundred feet above the village, but that seven hundred simply whetted my appetite. I wondered if I could find the beginning of the Tarpent, an old Indian trail back over the mountains leading toward Catskill, and, if I found it, if I could follow it in spite of all the changes made by lumbering. So I wandered on—now in real woods. The Tarpent follows what the farmers call a hog-back—a narrow ridge going off sharply on either side. There are so many valleys up in these hills that one can get miles from where he proposes to go if he does not watch out. I watched out. When I heard the church bells beginning to ring at Mineral Springs down in the valley, and at Greenbush up in the hills, I said, "I will go to church at Greenbush instead of Cobleskill, and thus keep the record straight." But when I got there, I found that the bell was for Sunday school, and that it was about over.

On the Tarpent one feels miles from civilization. A few farmers occasionally use the trail as a short cut on foot to Cobleskill, but even the poorest farmers now seem to have motor cars, and if they have none of their own there are chances to ride with neighbors. So the trail is almost always a solitary place. In years past, we used to emerge into clearings now and then, but these now have gone back to forest—one to long-leaved white pines which had been planted,

another to birch and maple which had sprung up unaided.

In the densest part of the woods, I heard the strange alarm note of a bird, and sat down to see what would happen. In a few moments the woods were all alive with the liquid notes of the wood thrush. There must have been a dozen of them singing on every side. It was an unusual experience and a wonderful one, for this bird is one of the best of our singers. It seemed almost as if I were in church after all—in one of God's first temples, with a special angelic choir and a sermon that roused no opposition or doubt, but went straight to the mark.

When I came out of the woods at last, I was on the road between West Greenbush and Greenbush, and near the summit of one of our higher hills called the Petersburg Mountain, some 2,300 feet, where we used to sleep out sometimes to get the wonderful view of the sunrise. The farmer whom I surprised drinking at the well took me in to his telephone, and in a moment I had the old home and my brother, and arranged for them to come up the mountain and meet me at Greenbush.

There are many more things that might be added to this story if the mail were not closing:

About the glug-glub-glub of a cuckoo and how the Madame led the search for him when she arrived in the Ford.

About an old man who assisted us. "Man and boy," he said, he had lived around here seventy years and there had been a cuckoo here every year. "A bird often heard, never seen," he commented.

About the lovely drive back down the mountain another way.

About the church people who saw us drive into town as they made their way home. Perhaps they didn't see us. Perhaps it was only a guilty conscience.

And about broiled chickens for dinner at my brother's big table, broiled chickens and strawberry pie after being up and on a tramp from 4 a. m.

Whatever may have happened to the church-going, there was nothing that limited the devout thanksgiving aroused by such a morning out and such a welcome back.

CHAPTER IX

GOING HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

BOSTON the Thursday before Christmas. Crowds pouring into the railroad terminals, crowds pouring out and scattering to the four winds, crowds on the streets, crowds in the stores. Masses of happy people getting ready for Christmas 1926.

Holly and evergreen, bayberries and bunchberries, wreaths and festoons of every kind, for sale by the hucksters.

In the big market turkeys and geese, chickens and ducks, ready for the Christmas dinner, the biggest and plumpest tied up with the broad red ribbons of their decoration.

Porters staggering under heavy loads, trucks going at a snail's pace through the crowd, traffic officers put to it to keep things moving, owners and clerks, butchers and butchers' boys, horses and drivers, buyers and sellers, moving steadily forward toward the great day of the year.

Wednesday with its soft weather endangered perishable food supplies. Thursday with its crisp weather saved the day for the dealers, and incidentally stiffened prices. "Seventy-five cents a pound for a prime turkey," said my favorite market man. Then, *sotto voce*, "Seventy cents to you, sir."

People who could not or would not pay seventy cents even for the best turkey, or sixty for the cold storage, did not have to go hungry. The great porkers and the little pigs hung in long lines. The huge quarters of beef, the real Australian mutton, the tender "spring" lambs, were ready to adapt themselves to any pocketbooks.

The vegetables, fruits and nuts both from the ends of the earth and the market gardens in the suburbs were ready to leap into any gap caused by vegetarian principles. The market was ready for Christmas. The good citizens of Boston were getting ready as fast as they could.

There was not much really fundamental work done at the office. The correspondence might secure attention, the callers might be received, the odds and ends might be picked up, but no philosophical or theological question had any chance at all. Other things were in the air. It was getting near the time for Santa Claus, and one was more in the mood for "the night before Christmas" than for even fascinating "Will Durant." Nay, Will Durant himself, we were sure, had dropped his philosophy and was down on his hands and knees playing "horse" or "bear," or up on a stepladder trimming a tree.

The back of the week's work was broken. A mighty tide already had us in its grip and was bearing us steadily on toward Christmas.

"Don't try to tell again about going home for Christmas," said a friend. "People will detect you repeating yourself like an old man. Take a new line."

The advice was well meant and kindly, but my friend ignored the fact that Christmas is perennially young—always new.

Besides, no two years, no two trips, no two days—ever are alike. And one who writes on the same theme never is twice alike himself.

We took the same 11 p. m. train from Boston to Albany. We had a friendly porter whom we had had many times before. But nobody in the car was the same, the situation facing the porter was not the same, our feelings were not the same. The porter had not been able to take over the car until half an hour before we appeared. It was only partly made up. The

Madame could go to bed, but I had to sit up for an hour. Those who sat up with me I never had seen before, but one of them knew my old town, and some of the people in it. He had gone to an engineering school for his profession, married, had a little girl, and now had changed his vocation to religious education. He told me all about studying under Dean Athearn at Boston University, and earning his way by taking charge of religious education work for a church. I told him about a great engineer, Morgan, who went into education as president of Antioch College, and neither of us noticed the hour we had to wait for our berths.

"Women and children first" is the rule of the good porter on a sleeper as it is of the good sailor on the seas.

The same old crowd in the Albany station the next morning, but not quite the same. Some had "gone on" who had been traveling the year before. Some were going home for the first time since they had broken away.

Things were not running with the clocklike precision one finds usually on the New York Central. Two freight cars, as luck would have it, had taken the busiest night of the winter to jump the track and smash the engine of a New York-Poughkeepsie local. The accident had torn up one track for rods and blocked the other tracks. It had occurred early in the evening just in time to stop practically all of the great series of heavy trains which start out of the Grand Central every night, and which this night were running in many sections.

So we found in Albany fully a thousand people who had been sitting up waiting most of the night. They were cheerful and philosophical as a rule. One young couple seated near us had a baby with them about a year old—all going home to Canada for Christmas. Since 1 a. m. the baby had been fast asleep.

Now he looked up and his mother playfully chided him: "You are just a little bum—a regular little bum—sitting up all night in a railway station." Little Bruce, for that we discovered was his name (we specialize in little Bruces), took it smilingly and reached for his bottle.

There were various rumors about the accident. One railroad man said he heard five had been killed. The most reliable report I secured, since confirmed, was that the fireman was badly hurt and dying. The Albany papers also told of a terrible wreck in Georgia with eighteen killed, and another on the Pennsylvania with thirty hurt. These reports seemed to give a grayer tinge to the gray mists of the morning.

The lights were bright in the station, the green of the ivy and box, the scarlet of the salvia, the tinsel of the Christmas tree, made a brave showing, but the impression was a little somber just the same. The men about the great terminal seemed to sense the fact that a comrade had been given his release—the day before Christmas. Perhaps they were thinking soberly of what such news would mean in their own homes. They were the ones above all others who could spare a thought for that picket of industry fallen at his post.

The 9 o'clock train of the night before was called as we came out from breakfast. The line was clear. The crowd was moving. The hurrying thousands had forgotten the fireman if they ever had known about him. But the fireman would be coming along up the river later, perhaps that very day, handled more gently, treated with more deference and consideration than he had received in all his life, unless it had been that first day when a grandmother or nurse had held him up in his swaddling clothes to receive the adoration of the humble folks in his home. There are shepherds and magi in every age and with every race.

The gray lifted a little when I went to recheck baggage. The baggageman was a bluff, husky fellow, willing to take the check, glad to fix a valuation slip, cheerful and hearty in his greeting, and he pronounced the name I had signed as if he were "to the manner born." "You came from Old Schoharie," I said on a chance. "Right you are," he replied, "I'm an Ostrander of Hyndsville, and I know the van Schaicks from way back."

"Make an awful noise when they try to say van Schaick over Boston way, don't they?" he went on, with a booming laugh. "Not much imagination in those Yankees. Brown or Smith is their size."

I defended Boston on general grounds exclusively, not attempting to join issue with him as to what Boston knows about the Dutch of old New York. But his good-will did me good this rather cheerless morning. He would be surprised to hear his friendliness described as "morning worship," but it was not a bad substitute for the page we try to read together when we are alone.

It was the same old train on the D. & H., bound for home—cars, engine, conductor, trainmen, were much the same, but "old things had passed away." Behold all things were new.

The long row of sparrows sitting disconsolately along an icy gutter were new. The rows and rows of striped candy sticks hanging in a little shop down near the tracks were new. The dappled pink clouds just beginning to show up in the west above the gray were new. Nature had the same old grays, browns, pinks, greens, yellows, blues, blacks and whites to work with and the same hills, gullies, water courses, woods, fields, fences and buildings to work on—but her finished product was not like any other views we ever had had going out on the D. & H. train from Albany to Cobleskill. There was snow, but not

enough to blot out the tall grass except where it had drifted, and none at all where the northwest wind had had a chance at it. One side of a hillock would be white and another brown.

There had been a rain which had turned to sleet and frozen—not as it does when it makes the world all glittering crystal, but as it does when it makes the world all beautiful hoar frost. The day was softer than the shining days, but no less compelling in its charm.

Old and sophisticated as one may get, there always is an element of surprise when one suddenly is taken out of the usual scenes of business or the hurrying days of travel and set down all at once in scenes dear and familiar from childhood. Especially is this felt in an old house and with dear old familiar chairs and bureaus and beds and clocks, and all the rest of the things an old house gathers to itself as the generations come and go.

The surprise passes, but is followed often by an emotion not easy to put into words.

I can not hold with those who try to prove to us that walls can talk, that spiritual impressions made by former owners abide in pieces of furniture with which they have passed their lives. But sure it is that everything about an old house—from wall paper and rugs to dining table and kitchen stove—stirs memories of those who have lived there. In that first hour in an old home, if one can walk by himself in familiar rooms and keep the thoughts which come thronging from being crowded out by the concerns of the hour—he easily can put himself in a mood where he can pat an old clock and talk to it, or sit down by an old bed and just look at it, or commune with the silent walls without feeling that he is silly or sentimental. Perhaps in such hours we really learn what nothing else on earth can teach us.

CHAPTER X

CHRISTMAS AT THE OLD HOME

THERE was much fun this year in our "Christmas at the old home."

About 10.30 a. m. on the day before there came a telephone message from an uncle in Albany, describing the passage through Albany of the motor car of my brother "the Colonel," who was driving up from Washington, D. C., where he is spending a year at the War College. "The main car of Barnum and Bailey's Greatest Show on Earth has just gone through. Sleeping quarters for the dog, sleeping quarters for the bird, sleeping quarters for the baby. Tons of baggage. Will be there in two hours."

A little before noon we saw them coming up the street and rushed out. There they were: tiny Mexican Chihuahua dog, blanketed, a young finch picked up in Leavenworth, Kansas, as a fledgeling, half dead, and brought up in the family so that he is one of them, the little adopted daughter, the Colonel driving, and the Colonel's lady serenely reading a book on the back seat.

That what is one man's meat is another man's poison was proved again. Here was a rather frail lady who had motored up in the dead of winter 500 miles in two days and one hour, and she said it had been the most restful, refreshing experience in months. Here was my brother, who had done the driving, as fresh as if he were just out of a Turkish bath, and here were my lady and I, who would have been worn to a frazzle with that kind of trip. But the end of the journey was not at our door. There still was an icy

hill up to my sister's, 200 yards away, where they were to stay. They had come this far without chains and they proposed to finish it that way. So up they went —another brother and I tearing after, Bruce, the dog, barking madly, small fry bringing up the rear. We pushed and shoved, and they made the west side of the house. Here we put blankets under the wheels, shoved some more, and then decided to unload at that point. This job done, we started to back down hill to go to a warm garage. Skidding almost into a tree, we pushed the car past, and tried to turn around. Sliding into a ditch, we changed our minds once more, and this time backed down. It is well not to have fixed views when motoring on an icy hill without chains.

This exercise and excitement was exactly what we needed. It was true winter sport. Then, on top of what glare we had, rain fell and froze, and it was hard to stand up anywhere.

Seated in a big chair before an open fire, visiting happily with everybody, suddenly I found myself waking up all alone, and people coming in and laughing at me. The night on the sleeper, the morning exercise, the dropping of care, the change of altitude, and the big soft chair, made sleep not only possible but inevitable so far as I was concerned.

Then there were games in the afternoon with the children, and carols before dinner that night. We had six small nephews and nieces on hand and older ones arriving later.

A dinner of home cooked food, the lighting of the Christmas tree, the hanging of the Christmas stockings, the innumerable last jobs to do for Santa Claus, a late walk in the middle of the road to escape the slippery sidewalks—prepared us for the longest, soundest sleep of the year.

The Christmas dinner at the old home this year

was a great success. Fourteen of us sat down about 1.30 p. m. As the small fry had routed us out for a 6.30 a. m. breakfast, and as we had had plenty of exercise in the morning, we were ready for it.

The old house in which the six children of us were raised is a roomy one, but the dining room hardly corresponds in size to the rest of the structure. It is in an addition put on after the house was built, originally one and a half stories high, to contain dining room, kitchen, pantry, a summer kitchen, and closet—all one step down from the level of the larger rooms in the main part of the building.

Compared with some city apartments this dining room, fourteen feet square, is enormous, but it took planning to seat our family for the Christmas dinner. My sister-in-law solved the problem by using two tables, at the smaller of which she took charge of five children, the oldest nine, the youngest four and one-half. At the other table she put my brother and me, one at the head and the other at the foot, each with a turkey to carve.

While in the city one gets accustomed to dinners of several courses, with soup, fish and meat, back in the country where help is scarce and the lady of the house does so much of the work herself, we fall naturally into the old-fashioned two or three course dinner, and never miss the *hors d'oeuvres*, clams or soup.

In the old county, the irreducible minimum of a Christmas dinner is turkey, mashed potatoes, cranberry, giblet gravy and mince pie. Given that with bread or biscuit and coffee, and have it first class and well cooked, one will feel that he has had a feast. Usually we have much more, but these are the things which ought not to be left out if one is entertaining an average citizen of old Schoharie. And I take it that the same conditions obtain in most parts of the

United States. Between Christmases we frequently admit that turkey is an overrated product, is really inferior to a good capon, a fresh young Long Island duck, or even a young goose. Take note, reader, if you are inexperienced, of the adjective applied to goose. One can't plunge recklessly in buying geese. One ought to know one's goose and also know one's market-man. But however much one exalts goose, duck, chicken or other poultry between seasons, when Christmas rolls around one's mind turns to turkey. There is a psychic factor in it. It belongs to our country's tradition. It is a part of the home usage. It is a rallying point for families as the flag is for the nation.

Every year we read of mammoth turkeys specially raised and fattened for the White House, weighing twenty-eight or thirty pounds and upwards—beautiful birds and good enough in their way. They make a brave appearance when brought on the table. But as a rule a ten, twelve or fourteen pound bird, if young and plump, is superior in flavor. We had two of this type. They had been given a long, slow cooking in pans which had kept them from drying up, and had cooked them so thoroughly that they were ready to fall apart. Even the last morsel of dark browned skin was worth eating. Even the bones, so the dogs and cats testified afterward, were succulent. To be the carver, to have a knife sharp as a razor, to have a bird to carve that is perfect, to have a great reserve stock for "seconds," to have an assistant carver doing huge execution at the other end of the table, to have a table full of people homogeneous and all at home, to have "help" in for both cooking and service, and to be hungry oneself, is a fairly good start toward a good time.

The potatoes had come down from "the little hill farm," and were more than "potatoes." The

onions, celery, olives, tomatoes and lettuce for salad had come from one of the village stores, but the man who sold them used to take care of my grandmother's furnace after she had become an old lady and lived alone, and hardly ever does he come to serve us without some affectionate reference to "the kind old lady" who never complained when he had "a little bad luck" with his fire, but "put on a heavy shawl and said nothing."

The string beans were from the garden at the home place, canned by the ex-kindergartner from Washington, D. C., who now presides at the old home. The lemon jelly was molded with the lion recumbent, the cranberry with the ear of corn, both in molds we had used from childhood. The cheese and candy had come up from Boston. The ice cream, brought in a Ford car, had been bought from a druggist whom some of us used to play with as boys. The mince pies had arrived in a basket with the cook—an old friend also—who in her day "has been sent for to cook for 120 people at a time." When one tests her work, one is willing to say that twice or thrice that number of people would clamor for her if they thought they had a chance of getting her. With the pies she brought delicious tea biscuits as a Christmas present. An ambitious young girl, a student at the State School of Agriculture, straight, trim, bright, good, who often before has come in to help when we have been home, waited on the table and helped with the dishes. There was something about practically every article of food and the people preparing it which stirred a memory, or started a train of thought, or aroused a deeper feeling of gratitude.

We succeeded in getting together four of the six children born in the old home, with their "consorts and progeny." Two were absent, but telegraphed from their distant homes details of their day. And

the Rochester (N. Y.) brother took the sleeper Christmas night to be in the old home on Sunday.

In connection with taking down the stockings in the early morning, and the Christmas tree ceremonies after the Christmas dinner, there were the usual thrills, joyous exclamations, demands for help in operating new toys, care of the younger by the older children, and—must I confess it?—the one inevitable fight before the day ended, as the children got tired and a larger sister sent an upper cut to the nose of a smaller brother, who thereupon charged her like a young Dempsey. But this was a momentary ripple of war in a long day of peace.

Of especial interest to all the children was the coming for the first time of little Olga—dark, chubby, red-cheeked, brown as a berry—only four and one-half years old, able to speak French to her mother in one breath and English to the children in the next, keenly alive to all that was new, deadly in earnest to do her part, sunny and dear, a favorite at once. Her background already is in print—clean and honorable, reaching back through Washington to Fort Leavenworth, through her father to the American Army and through her mother to Russia and the dark and bloody early years of Bolsheviki rule. She never will love this father and mother less because of the father and mother she never will see, but whom she will come to know about in a perfectly natural way.

Among the things which made us happy were Christmas trees prepared for the birds in the side yard of the home, so close to the windows that we could study our little visitors without glasses. There were half a dozen beautiful chickadees, several nuthatches, both downy and hairy woodpeckers, and a few English sparrows, busy about the grain, the bread, the suet. A few days before our arrival great

excitement was caused by the unexpected appearance near the feeding tray of a beautiful evening grosbeak from the far Northwest. Only occasionally do wanderers from flocks of these birds get east of the Mississippi. Well do the members of the Audubon Society of Washington recall the interest aroused when seven appeared in Rock Creek Park in the winter a few years ago.

It was good after the Christmas festivities to break away with two of the brothers and go over the icy roads up to the little hill farm. One had to mind his step or he would slide off the road into the ditch. Special attention had to be directed to turning out, for there were ridges the rear wheels would slide along instead of crossing. It was a wintry scene up our valley—near the close of the short December day, no fire in the farm-house, no lights in the windows. But we had a drink of the flowing water, saw the ice mound around the artesian well, and put out a little food for the birds as an evidence of good faith and an earnest of our intention to come back. We talked with our overseer, who came sliding down his hill when he saw our car, walked through the rooms, touched a book or two, locked up the house and started back. It was not much of an expedition, but it was a taste. It held out promise of restful and happy days to come.

When we came to take the local train late Sunday afternoon, to catch the Boston sleeper that night, we agreed that there was no danger of running out of material for Christmas letters as long as one wants to write them.

Christmas is perennially young. The problem for us is to keep young enough to realize it.

CHAPTER XI

ONE MORE CHRISTMAS

THE bare facts on which this article is based are simple and have been set down in the *Christian Leader* many times. An unsympathetic critic might express wonder that I should try to tell the story again. It involves a journey by rail with my wife from the city where I work to the village where I was born and where I lived until I went to college, four days in the big square frame house where my father and mother spent all their married life, a Christmas service at the Methodist church, a Christmas dinner in the old home with the youngest of the family as host, the coming and going of other brothers and their families, calls on old friends, tramps in the snow, romps with a new generation of children, quiet hours before the blazing fireplace, and the whistle of the 9.35 p. m. train on Monday night to ring the curtain down again.

Inasmuch as the Boston, New York, and Washington papers report more people going out of the railway terminals than ever before in the history of various railroads, the story I have to tell I assume is not unique. By the very fact, however, that it embodies a common experience, it may render service as a kind of journal for people too hurried at Christmas time to write one for themselves.

It was on Thursday night that we stepped suddenly from work to play, from home to a sleeper, from the usual routine to the Christmas trip. A tall Christmas tree was blazing with lights in the lobby of the apartment hotel as we went out. An even more glorious tree shining with every color of the

rainbow stood out in front with little trees around it. On the nine minute run to the South Station we could see other Christmas trees from the train window—out of doors and indoors. From a hundred windows at least the Christmas candles shone out.

The Pullman had been backed in, the berths were ready, and we soon settled down. The Madame called up softly to the upper berth that she was wide awake and had nothing to read. I dropped down a few religious weeklies, hoping to put her quickly to sleep. Apparently they did the business, for she had the best night that she ever spent on a sleeper.

I never yet have succeeded in reconciling the Madame to the way they have at Albany of moving the sleepers that stay there up the tracks a quarter of a mile. To her it is disconcerting to find half a dozen locomotives near by when she climbs down in the early morning, headlights glaring at her, trains passing and repassing, switchmen and yardmen the only human beings around. It is over tracks, along tracks and over more tracks to the extreme end of a station platform.

"Everything is lovely, lady," said a trainman, hardly discernible in the dim light, as a mighty mogul went by. It was more lovely for the Madame when we got into the Albany station, whose light and warmth and fragrant coffee I seem to have effectively advertised some years ago. A dozen people have told me that the best thing I ever recorded in a Cruising article was the smell of coffee in Albany coming out into the darkness of a winter morning.

A young man in the lavatory of the Pullman who was soaking his head in a basin addressed me as Jack when I entered, but apologized, explaining that he had been out to a gay party the night before. "Some party," he boasted. "No college party ever had anything on this party. But, oh, my head! It

feels like the fag end of the day before yesterday." Amid groans which were rather proud groans he went on to tell what a scene he had made when he reached the sleeper—"thought the porter had stolen my fifty dollars," "had every official here before I got through," "man enough to apologize when I found my money." As we were having our toast and coffee he and Jack entered the station restaurant. Jack was too woebegone to eat anything, but our young friend did very well for that time of day. I heard him telling the waitress, "Some party." I could just picture him on the train he was taking up into Vermont, boasting to the conductor, to the brakeman, to the train boy, to the men in the seats near by—"Some party." The Madame and I agreed that probably *he* never would be summoned from an upstairs bedroom to take the oath of office as President of the United States by the light of an oil lamp. The poor boy thought it was smart. If some good old Vermont father could only pick him up, turn him over his knee and apply the sole of a slipper to long-neglected stimuli to moral action he might become President yet.

We supposed that we were going to have a black Christmas, but we had snow and cold weather. The week before a storm had swept across the country to the northeastward, which just missed Albany and Boston, but gave the greater part of New York State several inches of snow.

West of Albany we soon struck evidences of this storm. The golden stubble of the wheat fields, the dead weeds and dry grasses, even the plowed ground, stuck up above the snow or showed through as we entered the storm belt—wonderfully beautiful. "Wherever there is a dried up stalk of golden-rod or even a spear of grass," said the Madame, "there is a bit of ice. It may be more dazzling when there is more snow, but to-day everything has a more feathery, ethereal look."

We struck more snow as we went along. The sky was overcast, it was a somber landscape, the pines and hemlocks seemed more in evidence than usual, rising above the other trees on many a wooded hill, or guarding the entrance of a farm house. To add to the effect it began to snow—just enough to show us it could snow—driving along past freight cars on a siding as if it were starting in for a real storm. When we started down the long grade to the valley of the Schoharie, we could see, far ahead, the light breaking through. As we climbed up the valley of the Cobleskill it grew brighter and brighter, and soon after we reached the village the sun came out, to stay out for our entire visit. This is not to say that the sun had it all his own way. Not a bit of it. Try as he might, not an icicle could he melt even in a sunny protected corner. All that day the mercury went down, and the next morning it was only 2 above zero. Christmas Sunday it was 18 above and Christmas Monday back to 6 above. Though he could not subdue the icy northwest wind, the sun never ceased shining. He gave us four days of John Burroughs's "best winter sunshine."

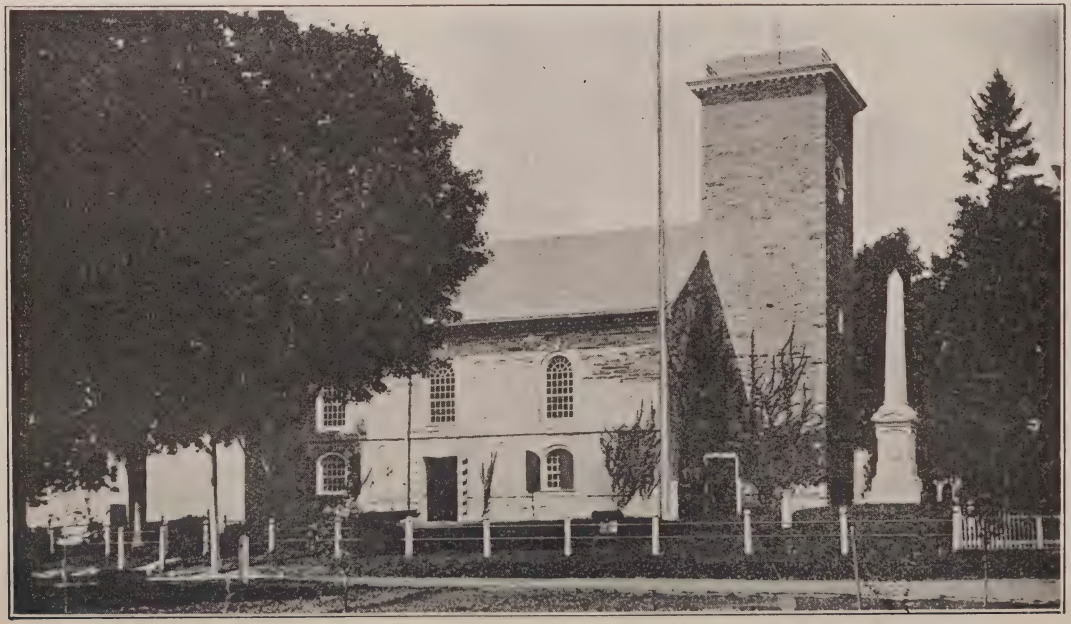
Low down in the heavens as he was, the sun made even the somber pines wear a different look. He fell on every bit of ice on the sidewalk and on all the snow packed down by motor cars, and made them glorious. And where there was a lawn or broad snow field he did his most dazzling feats. If the northwest wind sent particles flying through the air, he caught them and used them to fairly sprinkle the landscape with diamonds.

But before we leave the weather, we must pay our respects to our old friend the north wind—or the northwest wind. Ah, but he was in rare form! We discovered it on a tramp over the "Little Hill Farm." It seems that a man who had bought the place up

the other side of our steep woods wanted to know where the line ran, so he would not do any cutting on our side. In July we promised to come up and show him. In December we redeemed part of the promise. We "came up," three brothers of us—young John, my nephew, along—and the farmer, who joined us at the farmhouse. We had a glorious tramp through fairly deep snow, fighting a bitter wind nearly all the way, but we did not "show him." We unanimously voted for a surveyor. Yet we had a glorious tramp. The lawyer brother from Rochester, who has real avoirdupois, could not come for Christmas, but he had come down on a night train for the day before Christmas. He led off like a rotary snow-plow, making it easy for the rest of us. But, said he, as he grabbed a bush on the steepest part of the hill, "This snow-plow like every other snow-plow I ever saw, may 'play out.'" Our human plow did not play out, however.

It delighted us to see the little Scotch pines and firs that we had set out sticking up here and there in the snow.

Approaching the upper woods, we were struck by the number of tracks which the wild creatures had made. In the summer only the dog, with his marvelous scent, realizes how many wild things there are. In the winter on soft dry snow every wild creature signs his name. Along an old stone wall we followed a fox track. By a rabbit hole, we found chewed seed-pods or hips of the brier rose. Mice, rabbits, squirrels, the skunk, partridges, smaller birds, all had made their marks. We had an argument over a track "almost as big as a bear track," but the younger brother knew very well it was made by a squirrel jumping in soft snow, and the farmer quickly ended the argument by taking us to the fallen beech where the squirrel had run along the trunk to the "iron-wood" where he had "gone up."



THE OLD STONE FORT, SCHOHARIE

To which great-great-great-grandmother fled in the night

It was good to get into the woods out of the wind, and doubly trying to emerge again into the wind on the upper level. Usually I can get up a fine glow tramping in the snow, but this day there was not much glow about it. The seven-year-old nephew made detours like a dog and did double the distance, and he was warm—all but his thumbs.

In the woods we had a better chance to study our trees than we have in the summer. Every limb and twig stood out distinct against snow and sky. We have mainly maple, birch and beech, with a few hemlock, basswood, and ironwood trees. I had never realized the size and beauty of our black birches. "Wonderful trees for lumber," some one remarked. "Wonderful trees just to have as trees," I replied. A bad sleet storm followed by a gale did great damage in these woods a few years ago, cutting a swath down the steep mountain side. The dead wood is still solid, and we made an arrangement to have it cut out.

The peace of the winter woods! Nature may be "red in tooth and claw"—in the bitter cold we could realize the struggle for existence—but the bolder features of the landscape, much "the same yesterday, to-day and forever," the far views, the pure air, the quiet woods, seemed full of peace.

"Places they know you," said Trader Horn, "which is what people don't always do. An old tree or a bend of the river'll hang out a flag for you if you find a few doors inclined to be shut."

The drive in the Ford sedan (old style) up the valley and down the valley over hard-packed snow and solid ice was an experience too. Coming back just after sunset we had a golden sky in the west and some of those extraordinary purple and lavender colors in the east which come on rare occasions. Our feet were cold—because they were packed in the snow that had found its way into our storm rubbers.

Our hands were cold. We were cold. To get in out of it and on the hot air registers, or by the hot kitchen stove, or backed up to the fireplace, was solid comfort. Delicious warmth stealing all through your members, delicious sleep stealing all through your brain, a snooze with the cat purring beside you, and a coming to with dinner all ready—that cartoonist who takes as his theme "grand and glorious feelings" would not have had to travel far for a picture had he been through the afternoon with us.

There is a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church up here who unconsciously reminded us of a recent discussion in the *Churchman* on the preaching we like best to hear. The writer of the article decided that it is by the preacher we like best to hear, and that the preacher we like best to hear is the preacher we like best. At any rate, this preacher, by his transparent honesty and goodness, his humility and self-sacrifice, his appreciation of his brother ministers and desire to help them in their work, has quite captured the community. The Methodists may never elect him bishop, but many humble folk will elect him brother, friend, pastor. A child in the midst of his Christmas sermon made a disturbance, and caught the attention of his congregation. All he said was: "Friends, do not mind the child. Mind me and I won't be bothered by the child. I wish I had four of my own and they were all here and all crying"—more preaching in that sentence than I sometimes hear in a whole sermon. He put into feeling what he did not put into words: "Friends, if God is good enough to give you children let gratitude swallow up impatience. Friends, if I could bring back the baby we lost, it would be a joy to tramp the floor all night."

The congregation was not as large as usual. Whenever Christmas Sunday falls on Christmas day in Protestant churches, attendance falls off. It was

a good service, an uplifting service, with the old hymns, and the fine spirit of devotion. In front sat the editor who years ago as school commissioner signed my first license to teach. Across the aisle sat the woman who boarded me up in the hills when I was teaching my first district school. In the back row sat a stalwart fellow whose hair is getting thin, who went to school to me in my second district school two miles out of the village. Across the church were middle-aged men, solid men of the town, who went to school with me, and older men who were the middle-aged when we were young.

There are many memories stirred by going to church in the old home town. The great majority of the people I did not know. Either they were people who had moved in or children who had grown up and out of my recollection. And yet most of them knew me. If they had not, the friendly reference by the minister to my presence, and to the iron-bound contract he said he had made with me to be in the pulpit with him the next time would have introduced me.

"Christmas at the old home" always means a family reunion. This year we dreaded it because of the serious illness of the oldest brother in St. Paul, Minn. So cheerful and unflinching has this brother been about it that it seemed hardly playing the game for the rest of us to lose heart. The children who can do so always get back to the old home for Christmas. The Rochester brother arrived without breakfast, so close was the connection he had made in Albany. The Washington, D. C., brother arrived by motor, late in the afternoon, having had neither breakfast nor lunch himself, so keen was he to get his family there for Christmas eve. Driving up he covered 449 miles, 263 the last day. The sister of our hostess, the wife of the young Episcopal rector at Maynard, Mass., arrived from Boston with her two-year-old boy the

day after Christmas—traveling by sleeper after a day crowded with church services. It was a kind of progressive house party with most of the visits overlapping enough for us to see each other.

Never before did it seem as if there were so many Christmas days. The big family dinner was put on Monday, the day after Christmas. But there was a Christmas dinner with escalloped oysters and lamb chops on Sunday, and another Christmas dinner for the brother going back to Rochester Christmas eve, with ten at table. There was a Sunday school Christmas tree Friday night, and hanging stockings Saturday night, and a Christmas tree in the parlor Sunday, and hang-overs of stockings and trees on Monday. The family cat had trouble to find a soft chair not occupied by automobiles, or puzzles, or dolls, or new books, or railroad trains, or marvelous building blocks. I found her at last sleeping on the top of the back of an upholstered chair.

For the big dinner there were eighteen of us. The cheerful dining room has seven doors—and they all led in. As before we simplified the carving by having a turkey at each end of the long table—the youngest brother and I doing the honors. As before we had a special table for "the young fry," five of them with our hostess in charge—all there but the two-year-old who was sound asleep upstairs. And as before, the turkeys were the tenderest, the juiciest, we ever had had, and "mother's plum pudding," never better, baked from the time-honored recipe by the one sister, took us back again over the years. Without delays or accidents it all went off—because it had been planned and organized. Infinite pains—infinitely worth while.

Before we rose, I read a few passages from Dickens' Christmas Carol—especially about the roast goose and about the plum pudding coming on.

"Oh, a wonderful pudding! Bob Cratchit said, and calmly too, that he regarded it as the greatest success achieved by Mrs. Cratchit since their marriage. Mrs. Cratchit said that now the weight was off her mind she had had her doubts about the quantity of flour. Everybody had something to say about it, but nobody said or thought it was at all a small pudding for a large family. It would have been flat heresy to do so. Any Cratchit would have blushed to hint at such a thing."

I could not trust myself to finish "Stave Three," in which the Cratchit family is immortalized. The oldest, the cheeriest, the dearest in many ways of the brothers of our family was lying far away, very low, struggling for his breath. We were merry at our Christmas dinner—especially for the little ones—but perhaps more sympathetic than we ever had been with people in trouble or sorrow at Christmas time.

I could not read the words, but the military brother, another disciple of Charles Dickens, quoted them from memory, and with full hearts we joined in the prayer of Tiny Tim, "God bless us every one."

CHAPTER XII

THE DAYS OF REAL SPORT

TO children brought up in country or village, winter usually does not signify something harsh and unpleasant. Such children have a background of sport against which they project everything related to winter for the rest of their lives. They never say, "Now is the winter of our discontent."

It is different with many city children—the children of the very poor who are sadly pinched by bitter cold and the children of the rich who have their little liberty curtailed. All the grown-ups as well find it hard to get about in the snow. It blocks streets, clogs gutters, makes sidewalks dangerous and costs tax-payers great sums of money.

In my childhood the call of the snow was to get out into it. On that memorable morning of the first snow of winter, often we children would run into the yard, break paths on the lawn, throw the snow about, kick it before us as the cowcatcher of a locomotive does, and if it was soft make snowballs. There is no great difference between a boy and a dog in their instinctive reaction to snow. Dogs often indulge in the wildest kind of cutting circles when first let out in the snow.

In our village all children had sleds and most children had skates. Located up in the hills as we were, the snow usually was deep and lay on the ground all winter. This interfered with skating. Skating therefore was an occasional sport. There would come a thaw, a pond would overflow, then freeze, and everybody would hear about it and go there after school. Often we good little boys who went to school

without question would find on the pond half a dozen big reckless boys who had been wicked enough to cut school to go skating, and we would look at them with something of fear and awe, and they would look at us with much of superiority and scorn.

The most memorable skating of my childhood came in the few Saturdays when the Cobleskill Creek was frozen to its junction with the Schoharie, and we followed it all the way down—a distance of nine or ten miles—a supreme adventure. Much of the adventure was in going so far and in coming home from Central Bridge or Schoharie Junction on the 5.10 or the 5.45 p. m. train. It was delicious to sink down in the soft red plush seats of the coaches and ride back up the valley straight and swift, after our long, often hard, circuitous, route. Supper too was at the end of the journey. Only those really know light, warmth, and the taste and smell of home cooked suppers, who come to them out of the cold and exercise of a winter trip of this kind. We made the trip sometimes when conditions were only about 25 per cent perfect—rough stretches of ice, places where the harder ice underneath was covered with a thin, brittle coating which would break and send us head on into the sharp crackling stuff, and places too where there was open water which forced us to the edge or up the bank.

Even then, I think, we realized the difference between a stream as seen from the ice and as seen from the bank. There were wooded ravines here and there into which the creek curved where it seemed as if we had entered a different world.

Coasting, or "riding down hill," as we called it, was a much more frequent sport. Sleds were "sleighs" or "schooners"—the sleigh about twelve or fourteen inches high with runners fastened to the seat by supports front and back, the schooner about six inches high with solid wooden side pieces. We often said

that the schooner was faster on "crust," the sleigh on an ordinary hill, but that was a matter of some dispute. By getting a board and fastening two schooners to it, front and back, the front one by a bolt so that it could be turned right or left to steer the contrivance, we made what we called "bobs." In New England they called them double runners or traverse sleds. Later "boughten" bobs came along. (I use "boughten" with some hesitation, as I have heard the usage severely criticized, but put a good word in its place if you can.)

One or two winters there was a great craze for coasting. It caught the adults as well as children. It brought into existence "bobs" of a size and splendor we never had dreamed of. It resulted in coasting parties that went on long after we children had gone to bed. Bobs carrying twenty or thirty laughing, shrieking adults came tearing down "Harder's Hill," over the bridge at a risky curve, and on down past our house "way to the bank corner." At school one morning, we heard how the big bob coming down Union Street from the high hill beyond had run into a snow bank because "a pulley broke," and "A. P." had broken his leg.

In my day we had no snow-shoes, no skis, no toboggans. All those came to our village a little later. It was sleds and skates. Every hill was a hill for coasting, both in fields and on the highway. An occasional farmer had to lash his horses to the side of the road to escape a sleigh or pair of bobs, and an occasional sled had to be upset to get out of the way of a "team," but there were no automobiles. Once in a while the board of trustees of the village corporation bestirred themselves and ordered everybody off of some particular hill, but there were no "forbidden" signs in those happy days.

Pindar's Hill, nearest to us, was up a side street,

short and steep, but it led into a main highway parallel at that point with Mill Creek. The creek had been walled up quite in the European style, and the ground was gently sloping to its very edge, and then there was a drop of six or eight feet. Our problem on Pindar's Hill was to watch out for teams on the street and turn sharp left to keep from going in the creek. If we turned right we would be sure to hit the bridge. Only "Lou" ever went off in the creek, and I don't think he ever wanted to do it again. On this hill we became expert in upsetting in order to stop. Making the turn the first time I tried my bobs, the strain was too great, a runner of the back sleigh caved in just as my load was over the water which was running down the middle of the street from melting snow, and "Charlie B.," our old bachelor neighbor who had come along good-naturedly to hold down the rear end, went into the slush slam bang, sliding along on his nether garments for several yards. Instead of getting angry he said he guessed I needed some help building bobs, and led the way back to assist with repairs. Good old Charlie! He was a rich man's son (rich for our village forty years ago), a black sheep to some folks, for he never went to church and had weaknesses he never took pains to conceal, but it was he who first took us fishing to "the big creek," who always helped us when we were stuck with a tool or a weight, who gave us counsel—never bad counsel that I can remember—and, above all, cheer, moral backing in childish enterprises, even taking his share of the risks as he did the day I first tried my bobs. Not by any stretch of the imagination can Charlie B. be set up as "a guide for youth," but to the next door neighbor's children he is one of the institutions of childhood, to be remembered with affection and gratitude as long as they remember anything.

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy,"

but all play and no work makes him a selfish one. We honestly took great delight in the winter work. This mainly was "shoveling the walks." Up until his death when he was eighty-three years old, father bore the brunt of it. None of his sons had his stature or great physical strength. But his summons on a dark wintry morning, "Hurrah boys—walks to shovel," sent us all tumbling out. People who have never done it do not know the difference in snow, sometimes so light we could dispose of it with a broom, at other times so heavy we could hardly lift it on a shovel, with all degrees between—cold snow, warm snow, snow with rain, sleet, hail, snow that fell straight down and snow that came driving before a gale. All of it is plain snow to a man from the tropics, but to a man born in the snow country it has infinite variety. No two snow storms are just alike.

We had a horse and a "cutter,"which to the new generation is an unknown word. A cutter is a small sleigh for a single horse, with thills set one side so that the horse can travel in the track the other sleighs have made. I was the only one except father who took great pleasure in driving "Big Bill." He was a lively horse, especially in cold weather when he had not been exercised for a few days. Only once did he get away, and then he went straight home—trotting, not running, at great speed, but he knew all the time what he was about. It was my fault—not his—for I let the cutter run up a bank, which upset it and threw me and a small girl aunt of mine out in the snow. Such running up through the main street to catch old Bill. Such rushing of storekeepers and clerks out to see whose horse it was. Such a picking up of robe, cushions, whip and gloves scattered along the way. Those were the days of real sport. With what spirit in school we sang "Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way, Oh what fun it is to ride in a

one-horse open sleigh." We all had had that experience—not once but often. It was a regular thing in life.

The country boys knew better than we village boys what it was to "break open roads," to "get a horse down" in the drifts and "get him up," to take down fence rails and drive over a field to avoid a drifted road, to have a horse "calk himself" (cut one leg with the iron projections on the shoe of his other leg), to upset in drifts, but we had enough of it to know what it was all about.

The railroad came to our village when mother was a little girl. So we were born to it. But we lived there in the days when trains had more trouble with drifts than they do now. Occasionally in winter even now the village is without a mail train for a day. In my boyhood I have known the "block" to last a week. It was a great sight to go to a cut where a train was stalled and see it dug out, or to watch two locomotives hitched together back up the track and come down with speed enough to make an impression on the drift and yet not throw themselves off.

A few times each winter the warm sun softened up the deep snow and the cold night air froze hard again and we had crust. Then one could walk anywhere—sometimes straight over walls and fences—on white fields of snow which held us up, and sparkled as if millions of diamonds were catching the sunlight and sending it to us. There was crust which would hold a rabbit and not a dog, crust that would hold a boy and not a man, and crust that would hold anybody.

On such a crust we coasted down the long slopes of Indian Hill, sometimes breaking through at a sudden steep drop and boy and schooner parting company and going "every which way." With such a crust there was a great sense of release—roads,

walks, paths, were unnecessary, one could walk east, west, north, or south. The whole world—our world—was a highway.

It always surprises me to hear people talk as if life in the country during the winter must be exceedingly tedious and dull. In fact it is lively and interesting, with more things to do than we can keep up with. Summer visitors sometimes act as if the end of things must come to the villagers when they go away. They do not understand at all. Anybody with a household to manage has all he or she can do, city or country. A boy or girl in school leads a life of great activity. And if storekeepers and lawyers do find it "quiet" when weather is bad, it gives them time to catch up with things which they have had to put off. In winter, unfortunately, the doctors have more to do than ever, and they do not find it dull. Besides there always were literary societies, card parties, church affairs, and school debates to take time.

I am writing of thirty-five and forty-five years ago. The revolution brought by the motor has affected the country more than the city even. They drive their motors all winter now, and sleighs seldom are seen. It is nothing to go into the city any day. They have their Chamber of Commerce, their Rotary Club, their D. A. R., their New Century Club. It is not dull now. It was not dull fifty years ago. In fact—need it be dull anywhere, any time? Is not dullness a lack of inner resources? Does not the person complaining of nothing to do, nowhere to go, reveal more about himself than he means to?

Recently on a stormy night after dinner in our city home we read aloud again "Snow Bound," by Whittier. No more graphic picture of a great snow storm was ever penned. No better description was ever given of the self-contained, self-reliant life on a farm in the early days and the resources they had to

draw on for amusement when intercourse with the outside world was completely cut off. Above his poem Whittier puts the words of his friend Emerson:

> "All friends shut out, the housemates sit,
> Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
> In a tumultuous privacy of storm."

Right-minded men and women do not think of life as something to run away from. All ought to do their part to carry on the work of the world and make it a safer, happier, better place. But however active and earnest one may be, it is not wrong for him sometimes to run away for rest, and, if not in body then in memory, turn to scenes and places which Whittier says are "like a truce of God," breaking the strife of life. And he adds:

> "The worldling's eyes shall gather dew,
> Dreaming in thoughtful city ways
> Of winter joys his boyhood knew;
> And dear and early friends—the few
> Who yet remain—shall pause to view
> These Flemish pictures of old days;
> Sit with me by the homestead hearth,
> And stretch the hands of memory forth
> To warm them at the wood-fire's blaze."

Next to the joy of getting out into the storm is the joy of getting in out of it. Next to the tang and thrill of having the sleet and hail hit one in the face is the thrill of not having it hit you because of a thick window pane. Next to tramping through the winter woods is the memory of the tramp as one sits by a leaping fire of birch or maple.

The storm is a blessing. Shelter from the storm is a blessing. A wise, good God ordains them both.

Where City and Country Meet

CHAPTER XIII

THE MOTHER BIRD AND THE LEASE

WHEN the Madame decided at last that this commuting business between Washington and Boston would have to stop, and when we had given notice to our landlord and broken the news to our friends, we realized all at once that we would have to do some house-hunting in Boston. We had some cheery rooms at Universalist Headquarters entirely adequate for a man traveling back and forth, and for the Madame also when she came up, but not what we wanted for a home. They were on the fourth floor and there was no elevator. We did not mind this so much, but some of the friends whom we wanted most to see could not often climb the stairs. It is "no good" having a home where one's friends can not run in and out.

It has in it (on paper) the charm of the unknown. It is seasoned with the spice of adventure. It suggests all kinds of new things coming down a pleasant road to meet one.

The fact is, as many a householder true and tried can testify, that house-hunting is a wretched business. Even an optimist after a day or two at it begins to wear a hunted look. Even a gentle soul after a week at it was heard to call it "the most God-forsaken job man ever undertook."

To begin with, when we go house-hunting we are not in a frame of mind to undertake it. We are thinking of the old home, the old associates, the old ties of one kind or another. We go at it sadly, rebelliously or suspiciously—handicapping feelings in any undertaking. Then we do not know our ground and

therefore lack confidence. We seek advice, and much of it is confusing, or conflicting. Probably those who go through the process often enough develop a technique. Either that or they succumb. Then there is the indisputable proposition that if you are seeking unfurnished houses or apartments they are really unfurnished. They are empty with an emptiness that strikes into the very marrow of one's bones. They chill and depress to the uttermost. Empty rooms present all sorts of complicated problems in advanced geometry and higher trigonometry and surveying, when we are asked suddenly if we think a grand piano will set in what we had supposed was a closet.

Moreover, the average man does not know why radiators are put in wrong places, or why there are no wall spaces. He feels unequal to the task of interpreting these mysteries. Neighborhoods, too, often put their worst feet forward when one is house-hunting. There are delightful looking places, but the agent does not go to them. The dirtiest looking boys in the street roost on the front steps of the house he does show. The most hang-dog or surly janitors appear with the keys. It is astonishing what an avalanche of opposition, ill-humor and general depravity one can start moving when he begins house-hunting full of suspicion and unwillingness.

One thing in our favor was that we started with a clean slate. We had no commitments. We did not have to get near a particular church or school. We had no friends who would be sensitive if we did not do some pet thing. We had no relatives in real estate around Boston. We could go where we pleased.

Then we established a few principles to guide us: (*a*) We must not have too much room to take care of; (*b*) the place ought to be within walking distance of the office; (*c*) out of the rush of traffic, and with near-

by streets easy to cross; (*d*) with country surroundings; (*e*) and a view; (*f*) and transportation lines near.

Inasmuch as the office was in the Back Bay, it seemed wise to get on to a transportation line running out of that area instead of going across the city to the North Station. So reluctantly we dismissed the thought of our beautiful churches to the northward, the region of the lovelyMystic River and Mystic Lake, Tufts College with all its associations, Lynn Woods and the Middlesex Fells.

When we came to examine the Back Bay railroad stations we found what many a man before us has discovered—happily at a time when we did not have to catch a train—that there are three stations set as close together as peas in a pod, each with a different name and each with different stairs to get to it, and no crossing tracks possible when one goes down on a wrong platform.* The New York, New Haven and Hartford R. R. has pre-empted the name "Back Bay," and that name for them covers outward bound and inward bound tracks. But over the bridge to the Boston and Albany R. R., "Trinity Place" serves outward bound and "Huntington Avenue" inward bound trains. Old porters, however, always add Back Bay whenever they use either name.

We had a variety of lines going out of the Back Bay section. From the New Haven station we could go out on the Dedham line to a number of interesting suburbs like Roslindale or West Roxbury, or out on the main line to Forest Hills, Hyde Park, Readville, or Sharon. We knew also of the Pawtucket line, the Canton line, and even others turning right or left be-

---

*In the spring of 1928 the Back Bay Station burned and citizens waged a fight for a union station in the Back Bay District. The effort, probably unsuccessful, at least will result in passages connecting the three stations that exist.

tween Boston and Providence, but the places seemed a little far for daily commuting.

Out of the Boston and Albany Back Bay station, named Trinity Place, we could go *via* the main line to Allston, Brighton, the Newtons, Auburndale and Wellesley, and out the Highland branch to Brookline, Beaconsfield, other Newtons, Chestnut Hill, Waban and then back on to the main line again at Riverside. This was a "*chemin de fer de ceinture*," as the French call it—a circuit. Many of the suburban trains going out the branch return *via* the main line and *vice versa*. As the farthest point, Riverside, is ten and nine-tenths miles from Boston measured on the main line, we reached without great difficulty the conclusion that the total distance around the "*ceinture*" was twenty-one and eight-tenths miles, plus the gentle curve southward which the branch makes.

With an uncle and aunt and cousins at Newtonville, we also adopted the principle that, other things being equal, we would like to live close to trains that would pass not far from their hospitable doors.

We made two or three circuits on the "*ceinture*" and liked it. A friendly conductor, surprised to see us stay on when everybody else got off, made our acquaintance, and then proceeded to point out the advantages and beauties of the country. Our relatives interested themselves and sent us to an apartment house in the Newtons. "No housekeeping or dogs allowed" furnished adequate ground for rejection. We did not propose to live where we could not have our own breakfast table, and dinner table, too, when we saw fit. And as for dogs, although we could not tie ourselves up to one as we were situated, we did not propose to go back on the memory of all our dog comrades by living in a place where dogs were "not allowed."

We saw a number of places. One was too large,

another too small. One was too near the car line, another too far away. One was on a street that was too noisy, another on a street that was too lonely. All were rather depressing except the Bishop's. We had a chance to take over the lease of a Bishop, and we went to see about it. This was a democratic Bishop with a strong home feeling and a home-making kind of wife. Their apartment was beautiful. All the furniture was in place. They were still living there, and the sun just flooded the south rooms. Besides, they could look off over the housetops to the Blue Hills. We did not take the Bishop's palace—in this case an apartment—for there was too much of it, but it was something to come so near to inhabiting a Bishop's see, cooking our mutton by a Bishop's fire, drawing our water at the Bishop's tap, writing our sermons by a Bishop's light.

Finally the treasurer of the Universalist General Convention and a red-eyed vireo on her nest settled the matter for us. The treasurer burst out in the emphatic way for which he is famous and which wins so many lawsuits for him: "Go out to A— P— M—. (A name since changed.) That is Boston's last and best word in apartment hotels. It is on the Fenway and your wife will like it. You can keep house or dine downstairs. You can have company or be absolutely alone, just as you prefer."

Thus did A. I. B. sent us to A— P— M—. I do not want to be too open about suggesting the meaning of these mystic letters, for I have not been retained in an advertising capacity by either party.

In wartime A. P. M. meant something very formidable. One's passes were out of order or one's chauffeur had taken him where he had no business to go, or one had been A. W. O. L. Here we found A— P— M— to be a tremendous apartment hotel project only recently finished, not yet fully rented,

built in three units which were connected underground in a most romantic and convenient way. We went all over it and saw the marvels. It was situated at Longwood Station on the Highland Division of the B. & A. R. R., just over the line going from Boston to Brookline. The views from all the apartments were attractive, and some of them were magnificent. All Boston seemed spread out before one to the northeast, and much of the Greater Boston area in the other directions.

The exteriors were attractive. There were towers and turrets, gargoyles and griffins. There was a lawn between the three units under which were three stories —one stores, including an A. & P., one service, receiving room and garage, and one dining-room, ballroom, and a great lobby fitted up with remarkable taste and with an enormous fireplace at one end. One could get lost in such a place. As a friend remarked, it was "admirably adapted to dodging bill collectors. One never could find a man in the catacombs underneath." My wife suggested that one might have to dodge bill collectors if he presumed to sign a lease in such a splendid place. But there were plenty of reasons of alleged economy for taking it. "One could walk and save carfare." "A small apartment here cost no more than a large one in some other places." "And the charwoman would have so much less to mop."

Our spirits rose, moving seemed less unendurable, a home feeling somewhere else more of a possibility. While neither of us liked large places, there was nothing overpowering in this large place. And while neither of us had been there before, it did not seem strange or cold or far away.

We were predisposed toward it, I will admit, but I still claim that we never would have signed the lease if it had not been for a mother bird on her nest down

in the Fenway directly in front of the hotel. The Madame denies this, but not with an air that carries the slightest conviction. Still a little lonely, still with spirits above zero but not much above freezing, we took a walk in the long winding narrow park which Boston calls the Fenway, so as to get the setting of our proposed home. We had not walked forty feet from the steps by which we descended to the level of the little river, when with a low exclamation the Madame stopped and pointed to the dearest little red-eyed vireo I had ever seen—a mother bird on her nest, in a low branch of a maple just above the level of our heads. Many and many a hot day has the red-eyed vireo sung to me, both in city and country, when no other bird sound broke the silence of the sleepy afternoon, but my views of the vireo had been strictly limited to fleeting glimpses of gray shadows among thick leaves. But here was one so close we could touch her, with her beautiful red eye on us but otherwise undisturbed by our presence.

We looked our full and then made for a bench. "Really," said the Madame, "this place is not half bad. It is just a step to the train, and they say the Beacon Street trolley is only five minutes away, and the train only takes four minutes to the Back Bay station, and one man walks into his office at Copley Square in half an hour, and that parlor wall space would take our black cabinet and the grandfather clock, and that bed room would even take our Mt. Ararat bed," and so on and so on. But I knew all the time that she was thinking of the red-eye, and the wild ducks and the squirrels, and all the great family of wild things in and on and around the banks of Muddy River.

"Do you think we will take it?" she asked after a while. "Take it," I replied. "I knew it was settled the moment I saw that mother vireo on her nest."

And so it was. There were details about which building, which view, the price to be paid, when we had to take it, and similar subsidiary questions, but our house-hunting in Boston came to an abrupt but delightful end when A. I. B. sent us to A— P— M— in the breeding season of the birds.

CHAPTER XIV

OUR EIGHTH FLOOR FRONT

BACK in college days I had a round room in a tower up close to the roof of the Psi U building at old Union. It commanded a view out over Schenectady, a much smaller city then than it is today, and through the natural gateway which the Mohawk River cuts, up the Mohawk Valley for a long distance. That put deep in me the love of tower rooms. One summer in London we had a similar room. The hotel was a modest, inexpensive one up near the British Museum, but we had the top floor tower room with eight windows, and could look up and down the Thames for miles. That room too is a happy memory.

But for years I have been wanting to live regularly in a tower room. My state of mind has been that of old skippers used to far views who, when they retire to places like Searsport or Bath, Maine, build large houses with quarterdecks on the roof or towers where they can mount a telescope and command the harbor. When our friend A. I. B. sent us to A— P— M— to find a home I was struck at once with the number of tower rooms. The large apartment hotel, built in the Tudor style of architecture, rises in three units connected by three lower stories under the lawns. Each unit is built in the form of a cross, and there are two towers on each arm of the cross. We were particular people and had to have a top floor tower room facing the rising sun. We might have to store much of our furniture, as the apartments were small, but we would acquire the view desired. Luckily the lady who had rented the place we wanted a year before we came was

moving to a large apartment, so it was released in time for us to move in on October first. For four months we have had our eighth-floor front—through the autumn and winter months—and each month we have grown more attached to it.

Not because it is our eighth-floor front, or because it is situated at Longwood, or because it commands a view of a good half of Greater Boston, do we take the time of our readers to tell about it, but because it illustrates the number of interesting things there are to see on any spot of this globe if one will but stand still and look about him. For that matter, one need not take an elevator and travel to our eighth-floor front to see these things I like. There are a dozen points on hills or roofs or towers to which I could take one and give him the same view, or even better ones, of the same region. The advantages of living with a great view, however, are many. One gets it by day and by night, under all kinds of conditions of light and shadow, at hours when it is not convenient to climb a hill, at odd moments when one has nothing else to do, or is not in the mood to tackle waiting jobs. Those are just the moments when one needs a view the most.

In our tower room there are seven windows, looking out to the northeast, east, southeast, and south. By a compass line one might claim a bit of the southwest too, but we will heroically understate. We can see the North Star by standing up close to the window and looking far around to the left, and we can see a bit to the west of it. At the other end of our semicircle we can see in the south Big Blue Hill with its weather bureau tower, and the Arnold Arboretum a little farther to the right. Between these extreme points from north to south, we look out over Cambridge, Somerville, Chelsea, Charlestown, old Boston, South Boston, Dorchester, Roxbury, Milton, and we

know not how many places on beyond these, for on clear days with our glasses we see town after town we have not identified. The Bunker Hill Monument, a patch of the harbor, Dorchester Heights, where Washington once dragged his cannon to force the British out of Boston, and the Big Blue Hill with its memories of beacon fires in the old days, and lines of railway tracks, make the greatest appeal to the imagination.

If some refined reader cries out against putting "ugly railroad tracks" in a list with Bunker Hill Monument, let me explain that I do not see the tracks, except the tracks of the Highland Circuit, a suburban line almost at our feet—wildly exciting too for little boys who like to watch the cars. A train goes each way every hour and sometimes oftener. But the other tracks for us are marked simply by long lines of smoke or vapor as the fast trains pass and repass. Over Roxbury we see the smoke which may mean the Colonial or Federal for Washington, the Merchants' Limited for New York, or a Dedham local. And I beg of you not to turn up your noses at the Dedham local. It is full of sentiment. Don't ask the starter in the Back Bay tunnel if this is true, for you may land in an ambulance if you try it. Go out on the local yourself some time. Over a part of Brookline and Back Bay, Boston, we can see the smoke which may mean the Twentieth Century Limited for Chicago, or the Southwestern Limited for St. Louis, or maybe a Framingham local. I won't be too extreme in claiming romance and poetry for the Framingham local. I merely ask you what if Charles Dickens had been a regular commuter! Out of less than the Framingham local he made chapters that seem destined to live in literature. Then too on the clear frosty mornings when the smoke and vapor of the locomotive stretch out in a long billowy line which hangs in the

air for miles, we can see the early trains on the Fitchburg Division of the Boston & Maine headed for the Hoosac Tunnel and Troy.

What we look over the most frequently, however, is Boston—the Boston of the offices, the stores, the great hotels, the historic churches and public buildings. Always we point out to our guests the golden dome of the State House, the tower of the Custom House and the dome of the Christian Science Mother Church. The Custom House tower is said to be the most characteristic thing in the skyline of Boston, but from our position and elevation it is the dome of this Christian Science Church which is the most dominating. It is much more impressive than when seen near by. It even approaches in impressiveness St. Peter's at Rome or the Capitol in Washington, seen from some commanding height outside those cities. And at night, amid the flashing signs announcing razors, automobiles, tires, hotels, and world-famous grocers, this dome rises, bathed in soft light coming from unseen sources, a symbol of that light in darkness which religion must always be if it is to have any hold on the human heart.

Another church plainly seen in the daytime is our Universalist church at Boylston and Ipswich Streets —the Church of the Redemption—its pure Gothic tower outlined against greater buildings farther in, but not dwarfed by them. Closer still to the east is the Church of the Redemptionist Fathers in Roxbury, or the Mission Church, whose twin spires by day and illuminated crosses at night seem to be watching over us, and whose clock helps us regulate our own.

Of all the lights at night our guests are most interested in the aerial beacon, flashing like a lighthouse, telling the pilots of the air mail coming in from the West that they have reached the Coast and just beyond are stretches of wild tossing Atlantic Ocean into

which with their kind of plane it would be almost sure death to come down.

We are fascinated not only by these lights which we have identified, but by others at which we wonder and speculate. Off toward the Bunker Hill Monument there are flashes like those made by electric cars with an overhead trolley running along a wire. On clear nights whole groups of lights come out distinctly which ordinarily are entirely out of sight. And in the early morning when all the street lamps go out a powerful light far off over Cambridge shines on until the rising sun dims it.

All these things hint at the marvelous intricacy and complexity of life in a metropolitan area like Boston. How much there is for one to see! How much there is about which one never finds out!

A view of any community is a parable of life. Upon how many different aims, interests, ambitions, into how many different kinds of homes, does the sun shine by day and the moon and stars by night. How many different scenes are being enacted around these lights shining out from these ten thousand or hundred thousand buildings. In one the priest is kneeling by the bedside of the dying, and in the next one the thief is making plans for a bold robbery before dawn.

The near views, the ones we live with day by day, are the ones which become the dearest to us. The far views for the moments of exaltation—the near views for the levels on which we ordinarily have to move! What man is there with life so poor and stricken who can not call up at these words a part of a street or yard or garden or meadow, or even some chimney pots, which will live forever in his memory from long association? Even now, away from it much of the time since college days, there is a street which flashes before my mind as clearly as the landscape I look out upon as I pen these words, and passing up and down that

street are dear familiar figures, some of which have been in their graves for forty years.

From an eighth-story front in a commanding location, even a near view gets something of the spaciousness and grandeur of a far view, and one has to depend for intimacy on getting down to it or on concentrating upon a part of it.

That which is the real glory of our near view is our situation by the Fenway, on the bank of a little stream called Muddy River. It is not a name we like, but we have to put up with it. Contributing so much of beauty as it does, it seems to us as if it were entitled to a far better name. But it moves sluggishly and has to carry some of the silt of Brookline and Jamaica down to the Charles to be handed on to the matchless old filter at the coast, and Muddy River therefore it has to be.

The Muddy River rises about a mile south of us in Jamaica Pond. It twists and turns through Jamaica, Roxbury and Brookline, receiving the water of many springs and also in Brookline Village the waters of two creeks long since covered over by an advancing city. Just below our hotel it makes a big bend to the east and widens out to pay its respects to Simmons College, Fenway Court, and the Museum of Fine Arts. Then, swinging back to the north and west, it empties into the Charles above Harvard Bridge. We have this stream and its wooded banks in our near view. At sunrise it sends up to us all shades of purple and gold. At night it reflects moonlight, street lights, motor lights. It gives us two islands and two beautifully built bridges near by to think about, and wild life so abundant that it is worth a story by itself. Our part of the Muddy River seldom freezes over, and if it does the ice soon disappears, but just below us the ice stays all winter.

There are of course motor roads along the Fenway

—the Riverway to Providence across the stream from us, and on our side Chapel Street, carrying the traffic coming out Beacon Street or going in that way. Among our most characteristic sights in the short days of winter are endless lines of motor headlights—as many going in as coming out from Boston. What are they, what cargo on board, whither bound, what is awaiting them at the other end? They are a part of that fascinating mystery of a modern city which in one form or another renews its spell over us day after day.

The Muddy River just opposite our east windows has cut its way through the first of the hills one meets coming out from Boston. So the river banks opposite us are higher and the land rises to what we know as Parker Hill. There is a stack on Parker Hill which would be ugly if we did not realize that it is the stack of a hospital. And there are other stacks we are trying to get used to off Roxbury way, and even along Huntington Avenue, which we do not like so well when they rise straight up into a flaming sunrise such as we had to-day. Some of these stacks belong to the healing armies many of which are bivouacked in our near view. Just below us on Longwood Avenue we see the buildings of the Harvard Medical School and the many hospitals it has attracted to itself—the Lying In, the Peter Bent Brigham, the Children's, and several others. And on the very edge of the Fenway, so close that we see the nurses coming and going, there are the Deaconess Hospital and the Palmer Memorial for Cancer. There is a deal of good work going on close by, making us glad that we belong to a race which has willed to carry the burden of the helpless and unfit, and gone even far enough to resolve that the things which are causing so much of human misery must be discovered and overcome. The roofs of our own Tufts Medical also in the landscape, but a little farther off, make us glad and proud of what has come

out of the seed a few Universalists sowed here fifty or sixty years ago.

Closest of all is "our mystery"—if we would only make it a mystery. To some of the Irish servants it is a great mystery. "People have sold their estates to get away from it." "Queer spookish things happen there." "Oftentimes at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning something rings the bell." The mystery simmers down to a stone church with a fine square tower, set in a large churchyard with grass and trees which backs up so close to A— P— M— that I could easily toss a roll into the yard for the starlings whistling on the tower. The Sears family built this church—and the Sears estate keeps it up. In it are tombs of various Searses and Amorys of a by-gone day. It is held by trustees under such terms that it would be available for almost any denomination wanting to use it. While the Brookline Unitarian church was being built that society used it for some months. Every Saturday it is opened, aired and cleaned, and the lawn cared for. The mystery of the bells may be explained by the fact that the tower is connected with the Brookline fire alarm system and by the further fact that fires have been known to break out in Brookline at 2 and 3 a. m. We would not blame any of these Searses and Amorys if they did get up and walk about in the quiet of the night, but we are reasonably sure that they never do, for we have watched at all hours.

On some of the nights we have had since we moved up into our eighth-floor front we have been tempted to watch all night. The lesser light which rules the night comes up just as it did when those who lie so quiet under the church and beneath the lawn were young and rejoiced in it. Its beams fall on the tower, and then the church, and then the lawn down below —an invitation to any ghost with a love of beauty to walk. There may be fairer scenes which these eyes

WHERE THE BAND PLAYS IN THE OLD HOME TOWN

so long closed here now look upon. On a moonlight night, or a little later when the sun comes up again on the eastern sky line, it is hard to conceive them. At least it is our deliberate opinion that the hills and valleys, the little Muddy Rivers and the Fenways, moonrises and sunrises, the eighth-floor fronts and the fourth-floor backs of heaven, are not so much better that they will make our memories of earth seem cheap in comparison—or the angels so much better company that we will ever cease to long for the comrades we have learned to trust here below.

CHAPTER XV

FROM THE HIGH TOWER ROOM

MANY a time, in our high tower room with its wide view, I have asked myself what is my own percentage of vision. Just what part of the things a normal man might see do I see?

Carrying the thought a bit farther, how fully do I use not only my eyes but my ears, my nose, and other senses, in gaining knowledge of what is spread out before me?

I know I do not see what an eagle or a crow would see if he were perched on my window ledge, or hear what a deer would hear, or smell what the beautiful big police dog in the apartment directly under us smells as he sticks his head longingly out of the window. But I see, smell and hear much less than I might—if I paid attention. So at odd hours I have been paying attention—making little journeys north, east, south, from my windows, cruising the air with the senses, having some altogether delightful "Travels by the Fireside."

Breakfast for a change is spread out on the broad window bench—6 o'clock of an April morning, the window wide open and a rug over my knees, for it is still cool. I had no disposition to read or write or do anything but to look and listen, until I felt I must set down these rough notes.

A dull gray morning, with "high fog," as Californians call it, misty enough to shut out the Custom House and State House of Boston, three and one-half miles away. Even the tower of the New Old South on Copley Square is invisible until I put my field glasses on it. The dome of the Mother Church of

the Christian Scientists shows up distinctly, softened beautifully by the mist, and the business buildings and apartments this side of Massachusetts Avenue are clear enough.

The little Muddy River is Little Silver this morning, curving away under its bridges and around its wooded islands until half a mile away it seems to run into the stupendous building project of the Sears Roebuck people of Chicago. In fact it there turns sharply to the east and spreads out into the Back Bay Fens.

All alone, no one to talk to, up early and driven by nothing, it is fun always to note how many things one can hear. The sounds as well as the sights of a great city tell a story. At midday there are so many of them that only the most explosive attract our attention. All the others merge in a deep roar or a distant hum. But late at night, when nearly all but poets and tomcats and night-hawk chauffeurs are asleep, individual sounds stand out. Early in the morning also when the work of the day is just beginning it is a good time to hear what is going on. Trusting that the anti-coffee people will not think too hard of me, I add that as one sips the fragrant cheering cup, one can listen better and interpret more surely.

To begin with there are the birds on the tower of a stone church next door, or in the trees and bushes along the Muddy River, so near that the songs come up to my eighth floor front. Starlings of course (God forgive us for not feeling more brotherly toward these little brothers), the blue jays which have been around all winter, the robins lately returned, song sparrows, grackles.

The ducks also are doing some loud quacking, and a drake flying by in pursuit of another drake seems to be uttering veiled threats beneath his breath.

To me it seems a pity to have these everlasting triangle affairs intruding at 6 a. m.

There are no motors as yet, but a curious rumble in the distance tells me they are coming. Soon three iron-bodied trucks come up Colchester Street and swing down Chapel past the hotel and roar on over the Longwood Avenue bridge. These are headed unquestionably for a building project. The first delivery truck pulls up at the Longwood railroad station and I hear the plunk of a bundle of newspapers as it hits the stone pavement. Then there comes the sound of hammers, plain old iron-headed carpenters' hammers, from the Sears-Roebuck construction. In modern concrete buildings the carpenters play a big part. None of their work stays when the building is completed, but they make the forms in which the concrete hardens, do work that is but for the day but without which the work that is to last could not be done. The sound of a hammer carries surprising distances. In the country one hears it across deep valleys at some distant barn or farmhouse. In the city one seldom hears it except when the man in the next apartment is nailing up a picture.

Some of the most interesting sounds come from the ships. Obviously some are tugs scurrying about on their everlasting round of harbor duties. But when an ocean liner whistles we know it. As I eat my breakfast there come half a dozen or more deep-throated whistles. Perhaps one is the Bangor boat. Surely that deepest one must be a great liner nosing her way in. At any rate we can be perfectly sure that off there beyond the Old South and the Redemption and the Mother Churches freight and passengers are coming in. If we could see the list for a single night, legal and illegal, it might surprise us. If we could have the picture of a single ship with all its different people it would thrill us. In the early morn-

ing when the liner calls from far off and the sound comes all the way to our eighth floor window we can think about it.

The trains too are busy by night as by day. Our little local trains stop between 12 and 6, but something is always doing on the railroad. I see a headlight down by the Parcel Post Building where an engine is pulling out the cars the men have been loading in the night. If one is sleepless one can hear the puffing or some bell or whistle almost any time of night. It comes from Chelsea, or Cambridge, or Roxbury, or Dorchester, when other sounds are stilled. The sounds of the trains are a delight to us. As I take my breakfast the 6.19 and the 6.21, the first trains of the morning, pass. It is fun to see whether they will meet to the northward or southward, and which will get to the station first. They don't bother us. Seen or heard, they are always telling us about distant places, happy excursions, long journeys where the rails lead through green valleys or over continental divides.

From our eighth floor front at night we have a magnificent view of the lights of Boston. They are a source of never-failing interest and diversion. Like a broad black girdle studded with jewels, they curve around our tower windows. On a clear night, the view is indescribably magnificent.

Writing recently in *Harper's*, Sarah Comstock gave us quite a different impression of the lights of a modern city. Describing the lights of Los Angeles she said:

> "Throughout the downtown cross streets, they focus in fierce incandescence. . . . In all directions they radiate. They are not satisfied to shine; they chase about like slipping snakes, they spell themselves at you, letter by letter, like blows, they flash, off, on—black, bright, black, bright! You hear them like

> street brawlers, screaming, 'Pig 'n' Whistle!' 'Pan Gas!' 'Charlie Chaplin!' 'Eat at Booles's!' 'Mobiloil!' 'Rub It with Uncle Bill's Liniment!' 'Say Flick!' They shriek in your eyes; you long to hush them, to be rid of their blinding clamor, their deafening glare. If one sign among them had the poise to stand still, it would receive attention; quarreling as they are, each to outflash the others, they merge to one heady bedazzlement that leaves you with no wish to enjoy the proffered dinner, or to lubricate your machine, to apply Uncle Bill's or to utter the mysterious and magic 'Flick.' Your only desire is to flee."

All this is true to some extent of Boston, New York, Chicago, or almost any city. There is much that is garish, vulgar, about the great white way. From our windows, we too look down on slipping snakes chasing each other about. With our field glasses we can read the injunction to see our dealer to-morrow, and learn that the time is now 8.19 p. m. exactly. But lifted above the lights, standing off from them, getting miles of them at once, what is garish disappears and they thrill with their beauty and awe with their suggestiveness.

Leaning out and looking to the left as far as the building will let us we see the lights of Harvard Square and beyond them Arlington, almost under the North Star. Then in a great curve around to the east and south our view extends—taking in Cambridge, Somerville, Medford, Chelsea, Charlestown, the old city of Boston, Dorchester, Roxbury, Brookline, Milton and probably some places farther out, especially to the northeast.

In enjoying the lights at night one first thinks of them as a whole, next one little by little identifies particular lights, and then one goes back to a general view enriched by knowledge of details.

There are lights far off and near by, fixed lights

and moving lights, white lights, colored lights, big lights that throw a powerful beam, little lights like pin points. Some lights are easy to identify. Others we have not yet made out.

In the center of our picture there is a powerful, steady green light. It is on the new Ritz Hotel at the corner of Arlington and Newbury Streets, and may be seen from every direction in approaching Boston. Just to the right of it is a flashing light, the aerial beacon on the Gilchrist Building at the corner of Washington and Winter Streets. On a rainy night or when there is a little smoke in the air the beam of this beacon may be followed clear up into the sky. Steering between the fixed green light and the movable beacon the planes hit the flying field exactly. Not the Ritz only is marked, the pure white light of the Statler sign can be seen for miles. We see also the signs of the Elks Hotel, the Kenmore, the Copley Square, and the little flashing sign of the Lenox just around the corner from Universalist Headquarters. As for motor signs, they are done in every style and color. The razor we often use advertises itself nightly to us, and tires keep up their ceaseless competition. To us all these signs are sign-boards on our map; knowing where the various business places are located we can tell to just what quarter of the city we are looking. It is surprising often to find things placed differently than we supposed. From a distance of three or four miles we get an entirely different perspective.

But what are the lights that do not spell themselves out, that are not set for advertising? The variety is infinite. The light on the mail plane going by every night speaks for itself. There is no mistaking the headlight of the locomotive that at one point coming out shines directly in our parlor, and the long line of lights in the car windows flash by

almost always on the dot. The lights of the trolley cars can be seen on Brookline Avenue and occasionally a vivid flash from the trolley pole way down on the Cambridge bridge. Nor does one do any guessing about the motor cars. Of all the lights these are in some ways the most spectacular. We are so placed that from one side we see two main lines of traffic coming out of town, and from the other we see Longwood Avenue cutting both of these lines, and also see the incoming traffic on the Jamaica Parkway. On a winter night when it gets dark early, it is a great spectacle to see the cars coming home. They stop only when a traffic officer stops them, and then come rushing on in long lines, headlights showing for miles. In what offices and factories and businesses of one kind or another have their owners been all day? To what kinds of homes are they hurrying? What is there for the children on the back seat? They are magic cars making a fairyland of the streets if we are away from them looking down—making a holocaust if we are among them trying to get through. Our silent policeman at the end of the Longwood Avenue bridge flashes all night like a little lighthouse.

All over our broad view are the lights of buildings, and if one could see what they are lighting up one would have a cross section of our common humanity. We are on the edge of a hospital district. One day I counted twelve hospitals within a few minutes' walk. All night the lights shine there as the various shifts of nurses and pupils and orderlies and internes fight the battle with pain and death. The Deaconess, the two Brigham hospitals, the Baptist, the Children's, the Maternity—from all these the lights shine on us, speaking of that light of Divine Mercy and Healing which has come into the world.

Beyond the group of hospitals that lie on Parker Hill and at its foot there rise night after night the

lights of a Catholic church, the Redemptionist Fathers—two beautiful crosses sending their message and appeal far and wide.

One of the most brilliant of business buildings is the Parcel Post Building on Brookline Avenue, running full blast no matter what hour of the night one looks out.

Then there are the faint lights in the Custom House tower, the soft indirect lighting of the dome of the Mother Church, and stores with which we do business.

Less brilliant but more intriguing are the lights which we imagine come from homes—in apartments and detached houses. Boarding houses, some of them, and a Godsend they are to the lonely. Unhappy homes, broken homes, unquestionably, but by long odds the great majority just the average American home, which, with all its imperfections and difficulties, is the strength of the nation and the seat of the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth.

As the little lights twinkle out night after night we think of these hundreds of homes we do not know in terms of the hundreds we do know, and we are convinced that we do not go far afield.

With the passing of the hours the brighter lights fade out of our picture. The big signs go to sleep. The lights in the windows of the homes, except at Christmas time, cease to twinkle. Then we can see just what contribution the street lights have made. It is not so much close by, for in our foreground we have so many trees that they are partly hidden, but for miles around the beautiful pure white lights of the streets show up. We notice now that they are reflected in the Muddy River almost underneath. And we see how far they throw their beams.

Thinking about the lights of a great city at night, we are inclined to make them synonymous

with dissipation or revelry. That is too limited a view. They light up many services which we seldom think about. Our morning paper is produced while most of us sleep, the mails are sorted, our food started on its way. Recently we have had in our foreground eight striking construction towers, where a Chicago mail order house is building a Boston branch. On the highest is an American flag, and a powerful searchlight keeps it illuminated all night. I do not know whether it is advertising a mammoth construction project or warning the mail plane whose route is directly overhead, or testifying to loyalty to our country. Perhaps all three, but withal it is a striking and beautiful sight. Sometimes they work at night on this building, and then the lights are the most brilliant part of our night picture.

The Sunday *New York Times* carried an interesting article lately entitled, "Another Night Life Here Grows Apace." The subtitle was: "Thousands of Eager Folk of All Ages Flock to the Bright Lights of Culture Class Rooms." That is just as true of every great city.

To most of us the sun, moon and stars symbolize nature, the electric lights symbolize man. From that it is only a step to calling them "artificial," or even garish. In *Navavidhan*, a weekly religious publication of Calcutta, India, there is expressed a deeper view: "And this world, wrought through years of the travail of Mother Nature, we use for shelters, for furniture. The little bits of iron which keep them in their place, giving stability to the whole structure, are but Nature's ribs violently wrenched out of her sides. The electric light, too—is it not caught by the cunning of the modern Prometheus from India's thunder clouds and held captive to serve man's needs? Is there anything here (in a man-made house) which does not bear the stamp of Nature?"

We have but touched the fringes of a great subject. Across the table from me at a dinner last winter there sat a gentleman who had given his leisure for years to a study of the history of lighting. He has published books on that subject. What journeys we might make with him!

CHAPTER XVI

IN THE VALLEY OF THE MUDDY

AT A— P— M— we live in the valley of the Muddy River. In a previous article we have expressed our regret that this beautiful little stream has had to carry such a name all through its history. By "history" I mean of course not geologic history and not Indian history, but the history of the white man's contact with the stream. Muddy River rises in Jamaica Pond and Ward's Pond, and flows two miles between Roxbury and Brookline and another mile through the Back Bay section of Boston to its junction with the Charles River near Harvard Bridge. It is the main natural feature of the Riverway, on the edge of which we live.

We need spend no time in learned discussion of the origin of the name of this river. Suffice it to say that the first settlement on its waters back in 1635 in what is now Brookline was named Muddy River also, and that Brookline bore this name for the first seventy years of its existence.

The Muddy River settlement was a part of the settlement of Boston. Seventeenth century Bostonians soon discovered fertile meadows stretching up from the salt marshes of this stream and secured grants of land from the town authorities.

Wood in his "New England Prospect," published in 1675, wrote this: "The inhabitants of Boston for their enlargement have taken to themselves farm houses in a place called Muddy River, two miles from their town, where there is good ground, large timber, and store of marsh land and meadow. In this place they keep their swine and other cattle in summer whilst

corn is on the ground in Boston, and bring them to town in the winter."

Since we went to live on the banks of the Muddy, my life has been greatly enriched by running across a description of this river valley in three periods of its history, by Charles Eliot, son of President Eliot, who rendered such a distinguished service as a landscape architect, and whose early death was such an irreparable loss. Said Mr. Eliot:

> "Only a few years ago the tide from the sea ebbed and flowed in a narrow channel which wound through broad and narrow salt marshes from the Back Bay to Brookline. At low water each day the muddy bed of this tidal creek was exposed to the air and to view, while at extreme high water the marshes were flooded so that the salt tide lapped the bases of the bluffs on either hand.
>
> "Before the Brookline branch of the Boston and Albany Railroad was built along the foot of the western bluff, the sinuous creek, the sunny marshes, and the framing woods composed a pretty picture of a type characteristic of the Massachusetts sea coast. But with the incoming of the railroad and the accompanying great increase in the adjacent population an ominous change took place. The bluffs became the back yards of suburban houses, the edges of the marshes were made dumping places for rubbish, the marshes themselves began to be occupied by shabby buildings which rented cheaply because they were set too low. The situation indeed seemed hopeless. The valley of the Muddy River was obviously destined to become one of those all too numerous plague spots of the neighborhood of Boston which are not only ugly and dangerous in themselves but also extremely damaging to all surrounding life and property.
>
> "The city of Boston and the town of Brookline have thwarted destiny through the co-operative action of their park commissioners. The private owners of the backyards, bluffs, and marshes have been bought

> out. The Riverway has been built, affording not only an agreeable pleasure drive, but also a desirable frontage for private and apartment houses. By means of a dam the tide has been completely shut out, prevented from alternately drowning and exposing the low lands. By means of a gate at Brookline Avenue, the fresh water which now fills the channel is kept permanently at about the level of the high water in Boston Bay. By means of suitable pathways and bridges the completely changed but pleasing scenery of the transformed valley has been made accessible and enjoyable."

In the early eighties this development began to be pushed and by 1895 the parkway in Brookline was substantially completed.

After reading aloud Eliot's graphic description one night recently, we looked out on the Fenway from "Our Eighth Floor Front." Behind the screen of curving parkway, wooded banks, dark water, and twinkling lights—representative of the twentieth century development—we could see the other things which Mr. Eliot described. First, the horrible combination of swamp and dump which the advancing city was making. Back of that, the meadows, "long woods," and salt marshes, the farms and gardens, the country places of the Boston people. Still farther back, the primeval wilderness and the red men.

Other writers have taken us farther back, to the age when the great glaciers slowly receding piled up the drift over which we walk daily, and left behind the hollows where the ice melted last which now are known as Jamaica Pond or Ward's Pond. And geologists tell us also of remote ages when the sea covered this land, and the sea bottom rose up and drove the waters back, and something said "There shall be no more sea" in this place, and seething lava poured out as Titans shook the old sea bed and crumpled it up and made hills and valleys of it.

A— P— M— is situated at Longwood Avenue, and our windows command a view of the single-arch stone bridge which carries Longwood Avenue over the Riverway to Roxbury. One of the histories tells us that sailing vessels used to come up the Muddy River to the site of Longwood Avenue bridge, to the "oyster beds," and later to the brick and lumber yards, but that all this traffic was destroyed in 1821 when a mill dam was put across the Back Bay.

Coming home from work I often walk up the Muddy River, first crossing it near its junction with the Charles. Here are the Back Bay Fens, and millions of dollars additional are about to be spent to beautify them around the Fine Arts Museum and where they pass Fenway Court. Strangers often seem puzzled by the word "fen." It simply means low marshy land, and is a word common to all the Teutonic languages. Curiously enough, around Boston on the east coast of England are fens running seventy miles one way and forty the other which the English have been reclaiming for generations. The fens of our Boston were greatly changed by the work connected with the filling in of the Back Bay.

The Muddy River passing through barren flat land is the essential factor now. With these flats treated by landscape architects, trees and shrubs set out and the great curves of the river utilized as reflecting basins for the new public buildings, the plans of the original designers of the Fenway park will be fully realized.

One phase of this great change in the valley of the Muddy River never struck me until at Christmas time some one brought me "Sanctuary Sanctuary," by Dallas Lore Sharp, professor of English in Boston University. "One of the losing fights," said he, "that nature is ever waging with its sores which we call cities is going forward in the Fens of Boston along the small

margins of Muddy River in what was once the salt marsh of the Back Bay. Here the plants of the seashore, long since cut off from their salty tides, are making a last feeble stand against the combined armies of the upland, the fresh water and the escaped garden forms. . . . Only the trained botanist knows the full extent of this investing siege and sees the silent battle receding into the fatal shallows of the little river. But here is one plant of the shore that holds out stoutly against all comers, though only in two or three small clumps. That is what we used to call green-head grass, *Phragmites communis*, a tall plumed knight of a grass, from ten to twelve feet high, well known among the marshes southward. Here, with back against a wall, a meager remnant gallantly, gloriously harnessed, still waves magnificently defiant."

Nearly every day, going to and coming from the office, I had passed these great clumps of grass ten and twelve feet high, and had admired them, but the naturalist made me see them with new eyes. They were souvenirs of history—relics of a past generation. Attached to them there was not only the interest of great beauty but something pathetic and a bit heroic.

To Jamaica Pond is only a half-hour walk from our apartment. The path leads over several beautiful stone bridges and one island, past Brookline Village, where both Jamaica and Brookline seem to crowd in upon the Riverway, only to recede as one reaches Leverett Pond, the widest part of Muddy River. At the lower end of this pond one of the main tributaries of the Muddy which comes down through Brookline underground keeps the water from freezing over, and ducks congregate there in large numbers. In February five little boys, returning to Brookline from Roxbury, were attracted by the ducks and went too close to the open water and three of them broke through. The other boys and bystanders rescued two, and as the

third sank a horseman spurred his mount out on the ice until with a great crash both horse and rider went down. The rider dived until he brought up the ten-year-old boy, but he could not be resuscitated. Even shallow places are dangerous for little boys who can not swim. Hardly a month passes that there is not a drowning or a rescue or some kind of near accident on the Muddy.

Passing Leverett Pond, the stream turns into a little brook and the ground rises rapidly to the level of Ward's Pond, from which by a long flight of stone steps one can climb to the level of beautiful Jamaica Pond just above. Here in summer there is boating and swimming. Here the woods have been preserved nearly all the way around. Here are some of the choicest drives and walks around Boston.

Much more familiar, however, is the walk down the Muddy to Boston, or to "the city," as Londoners would call it—the old business part of Boston. To me this seems the best part of the Fenway, at least as far as the gatehouse at Brookline Avenue. There are two or three of the most picturesque islands, three fine stone bridges, and the paths curve enough to give beautiful views under the bridges and delightful vistas along which one can look to studios, apartments, or churches bordering the park.

If one is lucky one sees the pheasant just hopping out of sight in the underbrush. There are a few of the song birds also even in winter. And there are the ducks, so numerous, so beautiful, so interesting, that they will have to have a chapter by themselves.

CHAPTER XVII

MY DUCK FRIENDS

THE Wilderness of Boston" is the title of a chapter in "Sanctuary-Sanctuary" by Dallas Lore Sharp, which we quoted in our last chapter. He speaks of the crows near the corner of Exeter Street and Commonwealth Avenue. The Madame and I became so well acquainted with these crows through their coming to our Newbury Street windows for food that we named them "Jacques and Juliette Corbeau."

Since we came to live at A— P— M— on the Riverway the call of the wild life at our very doors has given us our most healthful recreation and some of our most delightful moments. We have only to go down in the elevator, out of the front door, up a few yards to the Longwood Avenue bridge, and down the stone steps, and we are in a new world. From a magnificent lobby with a great fire of blazing logs, with people assembling for bridge parties or starting off to a matinee, from expensive rugs, great carved beams and pillars, paintings and other art objects, we are transported as quickly almost as if we had rubbed a magic lamp to the Muddy River, the tall clumps of grass, the steep banks, the little islands and the trees and bushes in stark winter garb.

We like the roominess of the great hall, but far better the roominess of God's out of doors; the pictures where artists have caught and held beauty for us, but much more the pictures the Creator has painted for all who have eyes to see; the warmth of the woodfire, but also the warmth of the old sun on a Saturday in mid-February.

As we reach the river level, we are apt to hear the

chickadee in a favorite clump of bushes sheltered by the bridge, and if we watch see him go after the peanuts which I have hidden there for him. All through the winter the blue jays, the starlings, the pigeons and crows are active in our part of the Fenway. More rarely the juncos come down from the Arboretum, two miles up the little river, but the rarer winter birds stay up above where there is so much natural food.

The wild ducks are the most in evidence. Some are permanent residents of these inland waters, breeding on the little islands and staying the year round. Others come in for shelter and food in the stormy days of winter, and then go back to the wilderness.

Although my interest in birds is steadily growing, till now I have never done much with the water birds.

On an island in the Potomac above Washington, some dear friends had pointed out the gorgeous wood ducks which breed there.

In the Zoological Park, under the leadership of Dr. Palmer of the Biological Survey, I had looked at the ducks, geese and swans a number of times, but I knew so little that they confused me.

At meetings of the Audubon Society in Washington for several years I had heard reports of the thousands of ducks which come every winter to the Potomac, and, of course, had seen them on winter nature walks or as we drove about Potomac Park, scaup, canvasbacks, black ducks, mergansers, redheads, and others—only names to me except the canvasbacks, which on rare occasions I had eaten. As I write these words *Bird Lore* for January-February comes along, and I find Professor Oberholser of the Biological Survey reporting 40,000 ducks near Washington in October, and 130,000 in the Potomac in November "between Washington and Widewater, a distance of forty-five miles." With other fascinating

names, his report tells of Canada geese, whistling swans, shovelers, coots and golden eyes.

It is impressive to see thousands of ducks feeding in the center of a wide river, or rising in flight as a boat comes along only to settle down in a new place, but beginners have to get up close to become really interested in ducks.

In the Fenway and along the Riverway this winter we have been able to study the ducks close up.

It is a favorite pastime for nurses and children living near the Fenway on sunny days "to go and feed the ducks." With stale bread or almost any other food at hand, the little ones toddle to the edge of the water and in a few moments find themselves the center of a beautiful flock. Some of the ducks will come up the bank, run around the children and even eat out of their hands. Half-grown boys on the way to school sometimes stop in the same way. One boy I have come to know, perhaps twelve years old, feeds the ducks down near the gate-house at Brookline Avenue, where there is always open water. His aim is so good that he can send the morsel directly to the duck he wants to reach. It is fine sport for him to bring twenty or thirty of them up on the ice to chase the bread he throws out. Sometimes young married people appear with two or three loaves of bread (can it be a first attempt at bread making?) and then there is a great assembly of ducks to dive for the food.

On a golden October afternoon I surreptitiously abstracted half a loaf of bread from the bread-box and went down to scrape an acquaintance. It was soon done. The ducks and I took to each other. We seemed to have much in common. In two minutes we were friendly, and in two days they knew me by sight and came flying by twos, threes and half dozens whenever I appeared. Now I carry out a twenty-pound sack of scratch feed with me on the 4.59 or the

5.24 once or twice every week. The Madame, bird lover though she is, insists that it is one too many when she finds the bread-box empty in the morning and has to open a package of zwieback or "pep" or "zoe" or "biff" in place of the loaves that are gone.

Soon after winter set in the *Christian Science Monitor* ran a picture of a dozen black ducks on the ice of the Muddy River and with it a story beginning this way:

> Mallards and black ducks mostly, but sometimes other members of the duck family as well, enliven Boston's Fenway on the snowy, blowy days of winter quite as much as they do on warm sunshiny ones, and attract hundreds of persons from the snugness of steam-heated houses and apartments to watch them and feed them cracked corn or bread crumbs.
>
> Dozens of persons have made them their own special care, and go daily, no matter what the weather, with delicacies, spreading a table for the birds in what appears to be a wilderness of snow and ice, or rain and slush, and keeping open these "trails of kindness" throughout the winter.

Other paragraphs picked up here and there illustrate the wide range of the ducks.

A recent issue of the *Nature Magazine* tells of wild ducks taking refuge for the winter on the Salton Sea or along the Colorado River and in the Imperial Valley of California. A farmer's wife discovered a mallard's nest and set the eggs under one of her hens, with the result that she has a flock of mallards which come when she calls.

Bird Lore also has an article about ducks on the Scioto River near its mouth in southern Ohio. The author says that since ducks have been protected in the spring they seem to have lost all fear of man. In one place he identified eighteen species, not counting grebes or mergansers. In the order of beauty he puts

"the mallard with his gorgeous green head, the canvas-back with his light body and rufous head, the scaup with his black head and blue bill, the golden eye with his black head and white cheek, and the handsome pintail, whose dignity is unsurpassed."

My duck friends in the Fenway are mainly mallards and black ducks, but one day directly in front of the towering buildings of A— P— M— I noticed a small red-headed duck swimming fast in an outer circle and apparently a little afraid of new surroundings. With some patience I managed to get bread to him too, but did not observe his marking with the care necessary to identify him. A few days later I saw the same duck near the gate-house at Brookline Avenue in company with about twenty mallards and black ducks, my friend Billy B. feeding them. I noticed then the strange light cream buff streak on the top of his head.

Billy and I coaxed the shy little fellow up until we could see clearly the reddish washings on the breast, the exquisite gray back and sides, and the pointed tail. My report that night at dinner sent the Madame out with me the next day to see him, and she quickly identified the duck as a male "European widgeon," only rarely seen in these parts. There was not the slightest doubt in my mind after the Madame had looked him up in "Birds of Massachusetts," Volume I, but I called up the Audubon Society and Mr. Packard said he had been reported already from Leverett Pond.

Reading up on this visitor from afar, we found that he is known to breed in the Aleutian Islands on the Pacific side of our continent, but the nearest place to Boston where he establishes a home and rears his young is Iceland. There may be other places somewhere in the vast regions stretching north to the Arctic Circle, but they have not yet been located. This little fellow timidly accepting bread tossed to him in the Muddy River stands as a symbol of the vast un-

known—the unexplored continents and oceans, the things the brain of man has not yet found out. To hear his clear wild whistle is to have a breath of remote places touch one. He stands as a symbol of something Bryant felt when he wrote "To a Waterfowl:"

> There is a Power whose care
> Teaches thy way along that pathless coast—
> The desert and illimitable air—
> Lone wandering, but not lost.
>
> He who, from zone to zone,
> Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
> In the long way that I must tread alone,
> Will lead my steps aright.

My old friend Harkness, who comes down the path mornings as I start out, picking up paper with his iron-tipped rod, tells me that last winter some of the beautiful wood ducks came to the Fenway for food, and that in severe weather "all kinds come."

We were not surprised on a Sunday walk soon after to find one of these wood ducks sleeping on a sunny bank with the mallards. He waked up when we produced bread and seemed very tame. I exclaimed over the fact that he was as brilliant as the most brilliant colored engraving I had ever seen of this highly colored species. He was a plucky little fellow, grabbing a mallard drake almost twice his size by the wing and slinging him about.

Forbush, after describing the male wood duck, "his head of metallic green and blue with long profuse crest of purple marked with two narrow lines of white," body of rich greenish brown, bronze green and purple, wings of velvety black, purple and white, red eye, orange feet and many more exquisite details, says rather poetically: "Loveliest of all waterfowl, the wood duck stands supreme. Deep flooded swamps where ancient mossy trees overhang the dark still

waters, secluded pools around the scattered pines where water lilies lift their snowy heads and turtles bask in the sun, purling brooks flowing through dense woodlands . . . slow flowing creeks and marshy ponds, these are the haunts of the wood duck."

He then speaks of the bird as living and migrating mainly in the United States, as breeding more generally throughout the land than any other duck, as the choicest heritage of this kind nature has given us, but a heritage so wasted by our thoughtlessness that the bird became almost exterminated. "Spring shooting went merrily on even after the ducks had laid their eggs." At one time we had to send to Belgium, which had introduced the species from the United States, for eggs. There were more wood ducks in Belgium than in the United States. Now the protective laws have improved conditions and the bird is increasing in numbers.

One of the surprising things to beginners is to find that here is a wild duck which nests in holes in trees. To get the little ones to water might seem to be a problem, but the wood duck solves it by carrying the young in her bill, on her back, or by dropping them to the ground and secretly leading them to water.

The mallard and his cousin the black duck appeal to us the most because they are with us all the time, because we can hear them often in the quiet hours of the night, and see them flying or swimming by any time we look out of our windows. The mallard is beautiful enough to hold his own in any company. When the sun strikes a flock of them, their wonderful heads of emerald green shine with a brilliancy seldom surpassed in nature. They are the most widely distributed of any of the wild ducks, the most easily domesticated, and are said to be the progenitors of all the domestic breeds.

Economically they are called our most important

wild duck. But they are more than that. They are symbols of a philosophy I like. Says Forbush: "Its adaptability has made it the chief wild duck of the world. It readily adapts itself to civilization. It does not require a secluded island in an isolated lake in some vast northern wilderness. It will nest on a little islet in a small pond in a city park, or on a marshy spot near a noisy boiler factory, under sagebrush near a small water hole in a desert with no other water for miles around, or under a bush in a hillside pasture. It feeds readily on land and requires very little water. Although like all ducks it welcomes an ample supply, it can be happy in a puddle."

The Britannica says that these wild ducks are monogamous and only when domesticated does the duck become polygamous. As we see them going through their elaborate courtships, cutting wide circles and bowing repeatedly to one another, they broadcast beautiful messages of fideltiy.

Like Dallas Lore Sharp, I have a retired naval officer who keeps me straight about the birds. He is one of the most careful and competent observers and one of the most tireless and sympathetic of friends. Whereas Professor Sharp's commander lives in Santa Barbara, my commander lives in Washington. He has told me that the ducks are night feeders, explained about duck weed, that strange little plant which floats under the surface of the water and puts out its roots which never reach the bottom, what it means when we see the ducks tipping up on end and going after it, and how active the ducks are on moonlight nights.

When the Madame was in Washington for a few weeks in January I had an experience which I wrote out and sent to her. She kept it, and brought it back when she came. I can not do better than quote it: "After I came up here to the rooms to-night my eyes were tired, so I decided to walk. I went down and

put out the last of my grain and all the stale bread under tree No. 1 and tree No. 2 (our own private numbers). Then I walked on to tree No. 3 just a little below, and heard a quack. I saw twenty dark figures on the opposite bank in a long row, roosting on the edge of the stream. The instant I paused two adventurers plunged in and made for me. I turned tail, as I had nothing for them. As I left the whole crowd plunged after me. I felt so bad that I went all the way back—up eight stories—and took the salt-rising loaf I had brought up from Washington for toast. When I went back again there they were, dim and spectral in the light of the big street lamp from the Riverway. They came again in full confidence, appearing very hungry. As I tore the loaf to bits and threw it in, the water was agitated as if a whole school of big fish were breaking the surface, and the ripples shone like silver. One or two climbed out on the ice, one or two ran up on the bank with their spoil, but the majority wheeled and dived in the water like a lot of aeroplanes in aerial maneuvers. One odd fellow who swam in a big circle, keeping away from me, made a queer noise, not at all like the others. I'll wager he is a wilder bird of a different kind. I got two or three pieces out to him and he seemed grateful. It is the first time I ever fed birds of any kind at night. It quieted my tired nerves, ended my worries, banished my lonesomeness, and sent me to bed happy."

We owe much to our "duck friends." The little we can do for them in these wild days of winter is only slight recompense. In the hope that many people will help feed the birds, inland and on the shore, in city and in country, and help conserve all our wild life, we send these words—however inadequate they may be—on their way.

CHAPTER XVIII

ANOTHER WINTER WITH THE DUCKS

THE winter has not been an especially hard one on the wild ducks in the Fenway and up the valley of the Muddy, but it has been hard enough to make them welcome the springtime. Repeatedly the Muddy has frozen over the greater part of its length, and Jamaica and Leverett Ponds have been covered with ice. At one end of Leverett Pond, which is merely the Muddy spread out, there is always a little open water, due either to springs or to an underground stream, and just above and below the Longwood Avenue bridge under our windows there is more open water, for no reason at all that I can discover unless it be that the ducks keep it open themselves.

Over the radio Thornton Burgess said recently that the ducks beat the water with their wings on a cold night to keep from being frozen in. As to one factor in keeping open water I am competent witness. The ducks flying down in a hurry to be fed and landing on a film of ice break through, and struggling toward shore they keep breaking it until they make quite a respectable pool.

This winter I have fed the ducks with reasonable regularity under the Longwood bridge when there was snow on the ground, and just above the bridge on the grass near the foot of the steps when the ground was bare.

The pleasure of this short daily contact with our little brothers and sisters of the wilds, it is difficult to express. For less than the price of one theater ticket one can buy a surprising amount of scratch feed. The cost of grain for the winter all told would hardly

make a respectable doctor's bill, and yet the tonic effect of getting out in the gray of the winter morning, of breathing the cold bracing air, of having touch with earth and water, of meeting with friends, and rendering them some passing service on terms honorable to both sides, gives a tone to the system which "beef, wine and iron," the "Elixir of Calisaya," and "Blaud's pills" can not possibly produce.

There are forty-two steps from the bridge down to the path. The moment I reach the top of the steps and begin a low-toned chant, "Duck, duck, duck," the answering quacking resounds all up and down the stream—a low-toned quacking as the ducks begin swimming in my direction, punctuated with loud, excited, staccato quacks from two or three of the lady ducks. The Madame demands what authority I have for calling the loud, excited ones "lady ducks," and I reply recklessly, "On principle, on the preponderance of probabilities, and because I never have observed any dignified drake doing it." Above the quacking of the mallards and black ducks, rises a shrill, clear whistle. It is the shy European widgeon, sending his morning greeting. And there is a plaintive little note, "peet, peet," which makes me look for the marvelously colored wood duck, swimming with a bit more reserve toward the bank, and occasionally the notes of two or three other odd specimens, which makes it necessary to bring down the Madame later on to help identify them.

On many a winter morning I have had above two hundred to feed. On Sunday morning, March 4, the day I made this record, I had upwards of 120 by count. "Upwards" means that I had counted one hundred and twenty when the girl with the white dog came along and upset my count by sending my breakfast party into the air, and into the water, with the exception of half a dozen wise old grandmother

mallards, who have summered and wintered with dogs, and who go on shoveling up the grain while the others are making their way back.

Our single specimen of the European widgeon—a drake—a bird that breeds in Iceland and has selected Boston for his winter residence, hangs back in the feeding, partly because he is more shy and partly, I suspect, because he has learned that I generally will toss him a bit of bread clear across to the opposite bank, where he is keeping up a patrol, back and forth, during the excitement of the feeding. He signals "dog" with his whistle long before the others. Generally I step back out of sight to induce him to come for his share of the grain. At times he seems more voracious and comes quickly with the others. With his cream buff stripe in the middle of his red head, his gray body, his pinkish breast, he can not be easily mistaken.

The wood duck also hangs back, hoping for bread. When I toss him a bit, three times out of four a mallard or black (lady) duck will get it away from him. One has to toss several pieces at once, hoping he will get one. Either his dignity is greater, as befits his "mandarin coat," or his mental processes slower, or he is more gallant than the others, for he generally loses out until he too climbs the bank and goes for the grain. With his exquisite iridescent, greenish blue, bluish green, red and yellow, colors, set off by fine white lines like the demi-vest which gentlemen sometimes wear, his eye like a ruby, he is the one the young ladies from Simmons College, out walking with their young men, call rather inanely "the pretty one." He is not a "mandarin." That is another duck altogether. But, as the Madame puts it, he is like "a bit of Chinese porcelain." It is hard to think that he can be real, so little do we realize the infinite possibilities of nature.

The ducks live largely on duckweed, a plant which grows down from the top, but of course their feeding ground is strictly limited when the streams and ponds freeze over. Also we suspect that they suffer in freshets, when the grease and oil from automobiles is carried into the surface water sewers which empty into the stream. For a day or two at a time when the water is high, they seem to abandon the lower Muddy for the purer waters of Leverett Pond.

People all along the Fenway seem to enjoy feeding the ducks. Parents and nurse-maids take the little ones and teach them early that to get near the wild creatures they must remember two things: "No sudden movements, no loud noises." Kind-hearted people come with their stale bread. All kinds of motives, here as everywhere, drive people on—a desire to prevent suffering, an outing for the children, a love of knowledge, need of exercise for self or dog, or perhaps the call of the wild. The unfortunate thing about this kind of support of the ducks in winter is that it is intermittent. The more severe the weather, the less the ducks get. On pleasant Sundays they sometimes are stuffed to repletion. The fine old man who goes up and down on the Brookline side of the Muddy with his sharp pointed stick picking up paper and other debris, tells me that "the park people used to throw out grain for the ducks, but they have not done that for several years."

Mr. Winthrop Packard, secretary of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, remarked recently that "several members of the Audubon Society think that the society ought to assume the responsibility of feeding the ducks in winter."

The city of Oakland, California, by the expenditure of five or six hundred dollars a year for grain, and by making a "refuge" of one part of Lake Merritt, has attracted the wild ducks, geese and swans by the

thousands, and made itself famous all over the country. As many as five thousand wild ducks have taken refuge behind the log boom which prevents boating in that part of the lake, and have learned to use the lawns reserved for them.

Joseph Dixon of the University of California contributed to *Bird Lore*, September-October, 1927, an article on "A Lesson in Civic Ornithology" in which he said: "The four principal attractions which are offered wild ducks at Lake Merritt in estimated order of importance are: sanctuary, food, drink and suitable loafing grounds." The number of people coming to see the ducks fed at 10 a. m. and 4 p. m., he tells us, "became so great that about five years ago it became necessary to fence off a part of the land so that the ducks would not be crowded away from their dining table." As Lake Merritt is salt, several shallow basins of fresh water are maintained for the river ducks.

What Jack Miner has done to attract the water fowl to his home in Canada is such a fascinating story, it is worth telling by itself.

Nature lovers are not usually in favor of shooting, but those who shoot have a direct first-hand interest in experiments in civic ornithology. In every article on "our vanishing wild life," there is a reference to ducks. The growth of cities, the draining of marshes, the pollution of streams, have been especially hard on the water fowl. For years our friends in Washington have seen one after another of the favorite haunts of rare water birds go down under the march of "improvement." They have tried to induce Congress to reserve wilder parts of the shore of the Potomac as sanctuaries. That the ducks are diminishing in numbers is not entirely a matter of guess. In 1918 Oakland sheltered 5,000. Last winter the maximum was 2,138. Dr. Oberholser of the United States Biological Survey, in *Nature Magazine* for

November, wrote: "To insure that these birds shall continue to please and inspire those who come after us is a duty that we must not evade. Careful protection is needed now if we are to preserve what is left of the hordes of wild fowl which formerly frequented our land. To do this we need more information. The Biological Survey now proposes to inaugurate monthly censuses throughout the United States, southern Canada and Mexico."

When we first began to study the ducks in the Fenway and along the Riverway, the beautiful wood duck was our star attraction. Then all last winter the European widgeon was our main feature. This winter, European widgeon and wood duck, though interesting as ever, have not had the center of the stage.

Three others have come in—the female baldpate, or American widgeon, a small gray-headed duck with reddish brown on the sides and breast, the female "ring-neck," grayish brown, with reddish brown head, short tail, long neck, white eye ring, and a blackish bill with a light blue mark on it (a sea going duck), and as our choicest exhibit a beautiful little drake, a green-winged teal.

One of our neighbors, who writes books and feeds the ducks, first told us about the green-winged teal having come, but we failed to see him. He did not come to our breakfast parties. Two or three times we took walks hoping to see him, but without success.

On the coldest day Boston had had in four years, we walked to Brookline to church and walked back—the Madame remarking emphatically, "Nothing will take me out again to-day." But after our cozy midday lunch in our apartment, I looked down on the ducks clustered under the bridge and went down to give them an extra feeding.

THE LOWER RED BRIDGE OF BOYHOOD DAYS

The brilliant sunlight fell on a patch of vivid color, and I discovered a tiny duck, marvelously quick and graceful, smaller than any I had ever seen. When I threw out the grain it came courageously almost up to my feet, and I could see perfectly the chestnut head with metallic green on each side of it, the bit of black on the neck, its light brownish-gray body with black markings, reddish breast, with white underneath, and brilliant green speculum or wing patch.

Two boys came up, intensely excited to see a hundred or more ducks feeding on the bank, and I got them to help me list every distinctive mark. Then to the lobby of our hotel. Quickly the girl connected me with our eighth floor front. Said the Madame when she heard my story, "I will be right down." No second service, no concert, no afternoon tea or interesting person, would have been able to drag her out in the bitter weather, but a new duck—that was "*autre chose.*" "Green-winged teal," she said, as she reached the lower step, "and a beauty, too." Some people came along and the whole flock flew up, the teal showing again the grace of its movements. I had thrown some grain on the ice, and a little had rolled into the water. The teal began diving for it—almost with the quickness and speed of a grebe. The big mallards and black ducks tried to follow him to the bottom, but the teal took all the diving prizes that afternoon.

We looked him up in the books, of course. Forbush says: "The lovely little green-winged teal is one of the swiftest fliers among game birds. . . . In the water it is a buoyant swimmer and an excellent diver, but does not ordinarily dive except to escape some enemy. . . . The green-winged teal is naturally tame and unsuspicious, and old people on Cape Cod have related often how the teal formerly fed with the barnyard ducks. The natural tameness of this species

has been its undoing. Excellent as a table bird, it was in great demand in the market, and now in New England, where formerly it was common and even abundant in migration, it has become uncommon or rare." It would be a sad commentary on both our intelligence and our humanity to allow this lovely little creature to be wiped out.

As we were eating our luncheon to-day, without rising from the table I counted some sixty ducks in the stream just below our windows. A lady and gentleman came along with large paper sacks stuffed with stale bread and began to feed them. Picking up my field glasses, I could easily identify my duck friends, the sun shining full on them—the handsome mallards, the black ducks, or black mallards as Oberholser calls them, the little wood duck sailing proudly among them, the lady baldpate almost always too late for the choice morsel.

If one were not able to go out at all, if one were old or ill or busy, if one had read up enough to sense what was involved in such a sight one could still enjoy nature.

One could watch the antics of the courting period —the ducking, the diving, the bobbing, the cutting circles. Or one could look down, as I can look now from the desk where I write, on motionless ducks in a long line on the sunny bank, fast asleep, with head turned back, the sun lighting up the mallards so that from my lofty window they shine like emeralds.

Soon the north country will call and the great body of the flock will be away—to the inland lakes and rivers, to wild woodsy places, to marshes into which no human being perhaps has ever penetrated. To New Hampshire, to Maine, to New Brunswick, to Labrador, they will go, and our European widgeon to Iceland the books tell us. It is almost unbelievable that the bird to which I toss a biscuit to-day,

before summer comes will be at home in such wild remote places.

But some will stay. Some of the blacks and mallards breed on the little islands of the Muddy and Leverett Pond. They are only half wild. Their main trouble will be with the water rats and muskrats, ever on the lookout to seize a baby duck and make away with it. Probably the worries of those who set up housekeeping here are no more and no less than of those who wing their way to the north. Eternal vigilance is the price of safety. And the mother duck has it. With her little brood following hard after, she is not the silly or greedy creature I fear I may have implied. She is the embodiment of watchfulness, of courage, of protecting care.

There is nothing much more stable in a shifting world—as there is nothing much more beautiful—than such mother love.

CHAPTER XIX

THE COMING OF SPRING IN THE FENWAY

SPRING is never far behind. It is an unusual winter day when one can not find some messenger of spring, even on our "stern and rock-bound coast" or along the water courses adjacent thereto.

In the Back Bay Fens of Boston, or along the Fenway and the Jamaica Parkway which lead up the Muddy River, there are open patches of water all winter, and it does not take sharp eyes to find bits of green on a tuft of grass half submerged or in a sunny corner behind an old wall. The ducks are active all winter, flying from pool to pool as the Ice King freezes things up or relaxes his hold. There are the common winter birds with us—chickadees, juncos, woodpeckers, sparrows, jays, starlings, crows and pheasants—and always we cherish the hope that a robin or a song sparrow may have stayed behind, or that the rarer birds which come down from the north—the pine grosbeak or the snow buntings—may pay us a visit.

In the Natural History Museum there is a beautiful cardinal grosbeak who lived in Boston for several winters. He found food and stayed, and when at last he was picked up dead, he was borne in honor to a taxidermist and given a niche in our wild creatures' Hall of Fame.

No, we are never far away from spring, never out of sight of her advance messengers, never without the hope of spring in our hearts.

It was not the coming of March—a spring month which made us feel that spring herself had arrived—

it was the coming of the song sparrows. The Madame in Washington can find song sparrows in January—but there they often are winter residents. Our sparrows in the Fenway generally are sparrows that have come back from the South. One morning there may be no sign of them. The next morning they are singing away for dear life—hardly stopping when one walks up under the tree where they sit. People who do not know birds are inclined to disparage the sparrows.

They think that the only things in ornithology worth while are parula warblers or blackburnians, or things you have to lie on your back to see and can see only about five days a year. Not so! The birds most worth while are the birds that stay close by and get acquainted, and flutter down to get your grain and sing for you. Such are song sparrows—gray, russet, unpretentious, with only that little black spot in the center of the breast to separate them from less musical cousins, but so tame, so musical. John Burroughs must have loved them, for in "Spring Jottings," a chapter of "Riverby," he has an entry made up in the Catskills on April 21: "The enchanting days continue without a break. One's senses are not large enough to take them all in. Maple buds just bursting, apple trees full of infantile leaves. . . . A moist, warm, brooding, haze over all the earth. All day my little russet sparrow sings and trills divinely. The most prominent bird music in April is from the sparrows."

And April 2, 1890, he wrote: "The eye of the heavens wide open at last. A sparrow day; how they sang. And the robins too before I was up in the morning."

In the same chapter Burroughs speaks of the wide variation in song sparrow notes, and of one with a most unusual note which came back a second

year, "proof positive that at least one song sparrow comes back to his haunts of a year ago."

If I am ambitious enough to get up at 5 o'clock on some of these lovely April mornings and go to our window just as the sun is coming over the rim of our world, I get the impression that the whole Fenway is alive with robins and song sparrows—all singing. These seem to be the leading soloists in our April orchestra, with crows and jays and ducks playing the kettledrums and double basses, and our European widgeon, who seems to be staying on, blowing his little piccolo.

All through the latter half of March a strange wild cry in the early morning and at dusk puzzled us. The bird uttered just two notes of the quality of a young rooster trying to crow and giving two squawks instead. At first we were sure it was a water bird migrating, but time after time when I hurried down to the water it seemed to recede. The Madame and a friend looked up various things in the books, but to no avail. Finally, out of my country background, I said it must be a pheasant, and went to work to prove it. I appealed to an old Irish track walker on the B. & A. whose beat for two miles is along the Fenway, and he said "Pheasant," but he agreed so easily that it was no good. Amiability is admirable, but not trustworthy in investigations. So one April morning, just light, I took my coffee, and went down before the dogs were brought out for exercise and before the athletes in training came running by, and, all alone in the Fenway, I stole up on the sound. On a little bridge overlooking a wooded island, I came up with it. In the center of an island, half screened by bushes, was the beautiful cock pheasant standing on a log or stump and drumming much like a partridge only not so loud. As he drummed, he gave this wild cry that had come up to our windows on the

eighth floor of A—P—M—. I could see him rapidly flap and spread his wings, and could hear the rush of air against them. All this would have been a mere commonplace for a true naturalist, but for a beginner in natural history one such observation in person is worth twenty made through the eyes of other men.

I have often felt what John Burroughs describes in "Glimpses of Wild Life:" "That day on which I have any adventure with a wild creature, no matter how trivial, has a little different flavor from the rest." And again: "I am sure my power of digestion was improved that cold winter morning, when, just as we were sitting down to breakfast about sunrise, a red fox loped along in front of the window, looking neither to the right nor to the left, and disappeared in the currant bushes."

City life and country life are much mixed up when one can get such wild touches in our great centers.

The amount of good or harm wild creatures do can not be figured just in dollars and cents—in grain saved or eaten, in worms and bugs destroyed. A just reckoning would have to take account of the warm glow of pleasure which comes over one when he sees a wild creature under unusual conditions, or thinks about it afterward. One of the happiest letters of the season from a brother who is a hard working lawyer described how the wild pheasants, eighteen or twenty of them, came every morning to be fed at his back door, in the suburbs of Rochester, N. Y. "I have all the fun of owning a flock of chickens," he said, "without any care."

All winter we walk in the Fenway—for the snow plows make a path—but when spring comes the children come back like the birds. In their perambulators, or toddling along with nurses and mothers, they are a beautiful sight. Family dogs there are

too, to romp with them on the grass and sleep with them in the sun on the park benches. Then days of plenty come for the ducks. Children of all ages feed them.

Pigeons too are on the watch, and swoop down at the first sign of anything doing. The grackles, which come early, are tame, and frequently fly down and seize a bit of bread almost from under the outraged beak of a big mallard.

Small boys arrive in groups of two or three or more—small boys fishing choice bits of debris from the water, small boys tossing soft rubber balls, small boys punching one another if alone, on good behavior with their folks.

Lessons in care of the wild creatures, training in observation, start very young. In reckoning our accounts with the wild creatures we have to think of this too. It may be highly immoral to consider any man as a means to one of our ends, but we have not yet extended that philosophy to the ducks.

The first pleasant Sunday in April is the time to see the children and dogs out in force. The banks of the Muddy River in the Fenway are used to exercise dogs much as are the banks of the Seine in Paris. If only we could establish under the bridges booths for the "*tondeurs*" who wash and clip dogs, what a business they would do! It would strengthen the case for men who do not want to go to church, also. Instead of saying merely, "I have to exercise Rover," they could say, "This morning is the only time the *tondeur* could give Rover an appointment."

Strong men there are without the excuse of children to amuse who come to the Fenway Sundays to feed ducks. They bet with one another about their ability to throw straight to this duck or that.

Up and down the boulevards, alongside the park, up and down the bridle paths, up and down the walks,

flow the currents of the city—on foot, on horseback, in limousines, in perambulators, skipping gaily, leaning heavily on canes, the grave, the gay, the old, the young. One realizes that parking systems more and more will have to be regarded as among the necessities and not the luxuries of life. The more people use them, the more people become inoculated with a love of the out of doors, the saner and better life will be.

Those of us who love solitude can always find a spot where we can be alone. Our instinct takes us to such places as the homing instinct guides the bird. So we can afford to be glad to have all kinds of people use the parks.

But we have to admit that there are some drawbacks to the crowds of springtime.

The American Nature Association is fostering a movement called "Outdoors Good Manners Campaign," and has offered a prize for the best cartoons illustrating care of the woods and fields and parks we use.

The April issue of *Nature Magazine* publishes the first of the cartoons submitted, drawn by Mary Roline Stewart of Lasell Seminary, Auburndale, Mass. On it are two pictures. One shows a family littering up a living room, the husband tearing his paper to bits and throwing it on the floor, the wife paring potatoes or apples and dropping the parings on the rug, one child swinging on the curtains and the other upsetting the jam. The other picture shows a picnic place covered with tin cans and other debris of the family lunch, a child swinging on the limb of a beautiful tree, all broken and scarred, the husband and wife with arms full of branches and wild flowers they have seized.

Under one picture it says: "You wouldn't do this at home." Under the other: "Well—why do it here?"

The coming of spring to the Fenway, with the song birds and dandelions, the first green leaves of the iris, the first tender leaves of the barberry, and the first blossoms of the forsythia, brings also tons of litter made by thoughtless hundreds.

The Outdoors Good Manners Campaign might well be pushed even in cultured and progressive Boston

CHAPTER XX

GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH THE FOX SPARROW

MANY years ago we boys at home began to notice fox sparrows, but we did not know that they were fox sparrows—they were just "those reddish sparrows that scratch like chickens." We had no idea that they were a different species. Sparrows were sparrows—the differences to us being differences in individuals. We had no nature study in school. We were not encouraged to watch birds. And with near-sighted eyes I did not see much until, at eleven years of age, I was fitted with glasses. We would see one of the reddish sparrows once in a great while and then think no more about it.

Very soon after I commenced to take an interest in birds I began to hear references to the fox sparrow. In the nature books it seemed to be assumed that everybody knew that they were something choice. On bird walks I never saw them because they had "gone on north." Once in the spring at Cobleskill, N. Y., crossing Mill Creek near the cemetery, I saw a fox sparrow taking a bath, but he was partly hidden by bushes. The bird "intrigued me" however. I found a sentence in John Burroughs: "The ground sparrow songs reach their highest perfection in the fox sparrow."

Schuyler Mathews in his "Field Book of Wild Birds and Their Music," writing of the chewink, or towhee, says: "This large and bustling finch is famous for his devotion to the leaf strewn ground beneath thickets and brush heaps; there he will be found in spring grubbing with an intensity of purpose only

equaled by the fox sparrow or the itinerant hen. An ornithological friend told me he once saw an energetic fox sparrow scratching with both feet in concert, not alternately after the slow manner of the barnyard fowl." Part of this description I discovered afterward was rather "naive." Hoffman, in his "Birds of New England and Eastern New York," says: "When on the ground they scratch with both feet at once, jumping forward and back, often making a noticeable rustling among the leaves."

It is good for us to find authors disagreeing. It frees us from slavish dependence on books. It encourages our trust in our own eyes. It keeps us from making ourselves ridiculous as a fine society lady did once in the *Leader* office, exclaiming angrily: "We have the best of authority always. I read that statement in a book."

Book knowledge of the fox sparrow I had: "Red like a fox," "one quarter larger than other sparrows," "large arrow-shaped markings on the white breast and flanks." "Rufous brown," Chapman said, "feathers margined with cinnamon brown, upper tail coverts and tail bright rufous"—all of which to me meant just a "reddish brown sparrow."

"Breeds from Manitoba to Alaska. Winters from Virginia southward." That last bit explained why I had a hard time seeing him. There was only a period of two or three weeks during the time of migration that he would be where I was. Even the Madame, who goes on many bird walks and knows the birds well, had not seen him for a year or two.

Coming home from the office in Boston about 5.30 p. m. one day late in March, 1928, the Madame met me with the news that she had heard a robin in the Fenway, that one of the little islands was "simply covered with grackles," and that she had seen "fox sparrows."

This was exciting news, and I insisted that we go out at once to investigate. It was getting dark, but a few hundred yards from our hotel on the left bank of the Muddy River just at the Boston-Brookline boundary, we saw one of the little fellows flitting about in the bushes. It was not very satisfactory, but I marked the spot. The next day coming home from the office I walked slowly as I neared that clump of bushes. An English sparrow flew up. No mistaking him. A song sparrow sang ten feet above my head, perfectly indifferent to my presence. No mistaking him either, with that spot in the middle of his light breast. But what was that on the ground? He was scratching with both feet at once—busy as a bee. I put my glasses on him just as he moved out where the sun hit him. No question now. It was the fox sparrow, and there was his mate scratching away for dear life also down near the water. Hoffman tells us that song sparrows in the spring are unusually reddish brown on the upper parts and that beginners are puzzled to decide whether sparrows are song or fox, that "probably a doubtful fox sparrow is a spurious fox sparrow," that "when the genuine fox sparrow really appears he is so very tawny no doubt is left in the mind."

I had no doubt, for the Madame had identified him. Cheating on birds, like all other cheating, cheats mainly oneself. Let the preacher interject that. And let the budding naturalist add that, in doubtful cases, it pays in the long run to test and try, observe again and again, study, wait, and get the truth at last. It is mighty good of real naturalists not to despise some of us beginners. We are so cock-sure at times. We make such absurd claims. The whole tendency of our lives is to be inexact. Perhaps what saves the day for us is that men who give their lives to science are an unusually fine sort to start with. And then they

really know so much that they know enough to be humble. Whatever the reason, the naturalists I have met have been among the kindest people I ever have seen.

There is a more practical reason for not claiming too much. We are bound to put our foot in it and it is not pleasant to find out afterward that we were not laughed at simply because we were with kind, polite people.

The Madame went away for a little visit and I was left alone with my fox sparrows. What I did the first morning was to get up at daybreak—between 4 and 5—have some coffee and go down to the "fox sparrow bush" at 5.30 a. m. I wanted to hear the song. The ear is as important in bird study as the eye.

It was not a fool's errand. It would not have been if I had failed to see them. The song sparrows were making music on every other bush. The robin was tugging away at the unfortunate early worm. The jays were giving their sweet mating song. The ducks were cutting circles on the smooth surface of the Muddy where it widens out. The starlings were starting off in flocks. Newly returned grackles along the path shone like polished bronze in the sun. The pheasant was giving his call. No buds were out but the willow showed signs. At the water's edge the grass was green. It was a lovely morning—"good to be alive." Slowly approaching the rendezvous, I heard a different note. It could not be, could it, without any waiting or looking? But it was. Perched in the bush just like the song sparrow—the morning light full on him—the fox sparrow was singing. It was different from any other sparrow song I ever had noticed—richer, fuller. I can not describe the song, I can only give the setting. It was in a narrow parkway made by the banks of a little river, in which were

bits of wooded islands. Across the water on the Riverway to Providence motors were beginning already to pass up and down. On our side, back of us were the railroad and the streets of Boston and Brookline. The sun was calling to the trees and bushes still in their winter sleep, shining water near by, and a little bird singing with abandon and joy on a bare branch. Hoffman says: "The song is loud and rich, one of the finest of sparrow songs; there is a suggestion of generosity and courage in the manner of its delivery and the fullness of its tone."

Chapman quotes Eugene P. Bicknell: "Its song is not surpassed by that of any of our sparrows. It is a revelation to hear it at sundown, on some vernally softened evening of early springtime; little swarms of gnats hover in the balmy air; from the twilight meadows comes the welcome half doubtful piping of the first hylas—no other sound. Then perhaps from some dusky thicket a bird's song. An emotional outburst rising full toned and clear and passing all too quickly to a closing cadence which seems to linger in the silent air. It is the song of the fox sparrow with that fuller power and richness of tone which come into it or seem to at the sunset hour. It breaks forth as if inspired from pure joy in the awakened season, though with some vague undertone, scarcely of sadness, rather of some lower tone of joy."

Before my sparrow finished singing a song sparrow came to the next bush, and they sang together. It made me think of the time in the Arboretum when the rose-breasted grosbeak, the Baltimore oriole and the brown thrasher were all together, singing in one tree. One never forgets an hour like that. The men at the Dunstable retreat gave one hour to brief remarks by all present on the subject: "My Greatest Spiritual Experience of the Year." I can not put this duet first, for the year has been rich in many things.

There have been great books. I have had also a few wonderful walks. I have had a chance to see men and women do brave and unselfish things. And I have seen my first playmate in this world cheerily wave his hand good-by for the last time. I can not put the fox sparrow first, but I can put this duet down in the Book of Memory as one of the precious things. And I had it for the asking. It is one of the things in this world that can not be bought with money nor kept from us by lack of money, except as poor folks are chained to a slum. But the laborer who went by on his way to his early job paused, pulled on his old pipe silently and seemed to take in what was doing, and it made me enjoy it more.

I did not realize fully how lucky I had been until I found in Burroughs ("Signs and Seasons") this comment: "The fox sparrow who passes earlier (sometimes in March) is also chary of the music with which he is so richly endowed. It is not every season that I hear him, though my ear is on the alert for his strong, finely modulated whistle."

A few months before he died Francis E. Clark, Father of Christian Endeavor, sent me his little book, "The Gospel of Out of Doors." In it he tells us that too much of our learning smells of the library, that intellectual exclusiveness is only one shade less offensive to God and man alike than the snobbery of wealth. "Books, books," he says, "what can be dug out of books or put into books is all of life to some. Such need to learn that

> " 'One impulse from the vernal wood
> May teach you more of man,
> Of moral evil and of good,
> Than all the sages can.' "

It is likely that I shall remember this morning in the Fenway when I have forgotten all that the

books have told me about the fox sparrow. It seemed as if life went bigger all of a sudden, and as if I had been taken to the edge of depths I have never sounded.

Tennyson felt this when he saw the flower in the crannied wall and wrote the immortal lines, "If I could understand what you are root and all and all in all I should know what God and man is." So if we could but know a single sparrow in all its relations, we should know all.

My sparrows have gone. These warm days of April have called them on. What to me is a vast unknown expanse of earth and sky to them is marked with highways. These same birds possibly have seen the Fenway before—quite probably will see it again. Let the preacher have the final word: They are at home in a vast universe. "Your Heavenly Father feedeth them." Why be so worried? Are ye not of more value than they?

CHAPTER XXI

SOME INCIDENTS OF THE MIGRATION

LIKE many of my readers, I have taken bird migration as a matter of course—known about it only in the most general way, and paid little attention to it when it was going on.

Gradually the literature of the bird clubs in Brookline, Boston and Washington has made me conscious of the fact that if one will sit up and take just a little notice for a few weeks in spring and fall, he can learn many things. In Washington, from April 15 to June 1, the Audubon Society runs a series of Audubon walks on Saturdays up the Potomac, down the Potomac, and in some of the lovely wooded gorges tributary to the Potomac.

In Boston and Brookline there are similar excursions along the North Shore, the South Shore, in the Lynn Woods, and also an all day affair at the Moose Hill Bird Sanctuary. In the Fenway, too, and the Public Garden of Boston, people with bird glasses begin to show up at the beginning of April. Many a group I pass as I am walking down the Fenway mornings toward the office. If my bird glasses are strung about my neck, they serve as a letter of introduction even for the reserved New Englanders. New England boys of fifteen or sixteen, in the impulsiveness of youth, have even been known to address me first and ask if I have seen "the hooded warbler down by the bridge."

All this is interesting as throwing light on "why we behave like human beings." And studies of bird migration going on both at home and abroad are throwing light on "why birds behave like birds."

A scholarly professor of the University of Aberdeen* has written a learned book on the subject of bird migration, just republished in the United States, and Dr. Alexander Wetmore, president of the American Ornithologists' Union and assistant secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, has published several articles giving the results of his studies of bird migration in the interior of South America, where many of our birds go. Dipping into these studies I am made to realize for how long a time men have been asking questions about bird migration.

Aristotle died over three hundred years before Christ, yet Aristotle could make the following observation: "Some creatures can make provision against change without stirring from their ordinary haunts; others migrate, quitting Pontus and the cold countries after the autumnal equinox to avoid approaching winter, and after the spring equinox migrating from warm lands to cool lands to avoid the coming heat. In some cases they migrate from places near at hand; in others they may be said to come from the ends of the world, as in the case of the crane, for these birds migrate from the steppes of Sythia to the marsh lands south of Egypt where the Nile has its source."

Here was a mind which grasped all the essentials of the subject. Some birds to-day simply come down from high altitudes to the valleys to escape the rigors of winter. Other birds, like the terns, go from the Arctic clear around the globe to the Antarctic. We gradually are accumulating a body of trustworthy facts by "bird banding." People who can show that they are sober and serious can get permits from the U. S. Biological Survey to trap, band and release

*Prof. A. Landsborough Thompson: "Problems of Bird Migration."

birds. The bird bander records the number and name of every bird banded, as well as of every banded bird retaken and examined. All this information is mailed to the Survey, where specialists file and analyze the facts. What do the bird banders get out of it? Just what you, dear reader, get out of it when you clean up the place where you have had a picnic and burn or bury the debris you have made, what you get when you pick up the newspapers in the street in front of your house and throw them in the trash can, what you get when you leave the arbutus or dogwood or laurel to bloom in beauty for others to see. You get what dozens of scientists of the Government get out of it when they refuse $20,000 a year outside and serve the country at $5,000, and what corps of volunteer helpers in churches, schools, health departments, charity associations, scout organizations, and other similar movements get for service rendered. Bird banders get the joy of finding out interesting facts, adding to the sum total of knowledge, helping on things which no scientist can possibly do alone.

What a wonderful thing, when one stops to think about it, bird migration really is! At the appointed time, in successive waves, the birds come back. The scientists have made schedules showing when they will appear at this city or at that on their way north, and within narrow limits of variation the birds come on schedule—Canada geese, ducks, grackles, blackbirds, robins, bluebirds, heading the procession, and the late warblers, wrens, and thrushes bringing up the rear.

There is an interesting article in the *Science News Letter*, a weekly summary of current science, edited by Watson Davis in Washington for school, club, and library as well as personal use, on "Bird Migration Mystery Still Unsolved" (issue of April 30, 1927).

The article refers to the many weird theories men have held on this subject—one set down by Aristotle being that birds went into a torpid state in the fall and hid themselves in caves and hollow trees, and that swallows submerged themselves in marshes and the mud at the bottom of ponds.

Now it is clear that birds this side of the equator when they come north do so to breed. They pick places where there is food sufficient and where they can build nests and rear their young in comparative safety. Some raise several families in a season. By mid-August the first of the migrants assemble to start south, and by November 15 nearly all have gone. These birds new to the world go south like the others, and next year come back to the places where they first saw the light of day. Now scientists are asking what makes them want to go. Is it just a question of food? One might think so when he finds individuals of a species that migrates staying all winter where plenty of food hangs on bushes. Over at grandfather's in Sharon, once, in the depth of winter, we were surprised to find robins in thickets of choke-cherry bushes. What in the bird tells him when to go? What holds him on his course? Has he a sixth sense or does he see? How does he pack the energy in that tiny body to carry him so far? The whole world honors Lindbergh, and justly so, but this little warbler hanging head down picking at a bud just outside my window has performed a feat much more marvelous than the aviator, and the majority of us do not even see him when he gets here. There are "annually recurring stimuli," "external and internal," the scientists tell us, there are "general preparatory, primary stimuli," and "secondary or effective stimuli," and, all unconscious of it, here is my warbler.

Miss MacDill in the *Science News Letter* gives a few of the results of Wetmore's studies as follows:

The barn swallow and the bobolink fly the farthest south of any of our well-known and familiar birds. These hardy little *voyageurs* invade the pampas of Argentina, making a round trip journey of over 10,000 miles there and back. A few lusty individuals of the yellow-billed cuckoos, olive-backed thrushes, nighthawks and cliff swallows get down into the Chaco of northern Argentina and Paraguay, but most of our erstwhile dooryard friends do not penetrate very far below the equator. Mexico is far south for a catbird or a bluebird, while our migrant orioles do not get much below Venezuela or Colombia.

Long distance bird fliers who penetrate into the interior of Argentina and down into Patagonia apparently have mapped out three southward routes of travel. One *via* the Brazilian coast is patronized most by shore birds. A second is along the Pacific, taking in the mountain scenery of the Andes, while the third is south along the interior river systems. They follow the advance of the southern spring below the equator, disport themselves in the southern summer while it is winter here, and retreat back toward their nesting grounds with the coming of the northern spring. Thus they manage to keep in an eternal Palm Beach atmosphere of spring and summer.

Another interesting fact stated in the same article is the following:

The preference for perpetual spring displayed by the barn swallow, the bobolink and many other birds, is not shared by the Arctic tern, that makes the longest migratory flight known. Half way around the world apart are its summer and winter homes, for it makes its nest close to the North Pole, and has as a southern winter resort the icebergs of the Antarctic. The eleven-thousand-mile jaunt, changing from northern to southern ice fields and *vice versa*, brings the Arctic tern his longest contacts with darkness. In his daily life around the Poles he lives in the almost continuous though chilly light of the midnight sun.

To the average student of natural history the annual migration, especially the spring migration, is the big chance to study birds. Then the birds are everywhere in evidence, resting in parks or dooryards before going on to the favorite nesting spots. The Public Garden of Boston, in the heart of the city, is not very extensive, but 116 varieties of birds have been seen there in the springtime. Central Park, New York, is a wonderful place, too. All who know about birds are as active then as the birds themselves, for some kinds linger around only a few days, and then are gone for another year, and one can see them only by going to Canada, or northern Maine, or the White Mountains, or wherever they are. People interested in the study find pleasure and profit in keeping annual lists, birds seen during a season, life lists, birds seen during a lifetime, special lists, birds seen from a window or a sick bed or in one garden or at one camp. It may be I shall get to keeping all these lists some day—when there are not so many income tax blanks to fill out, so many calls to appear with all books, papers and memoranda relating to the year before the year before last. I have my life list started, thanks to the interest and help of my friend, Dr. G. S. Palmer of the Biological Survey, and a source of joy it is. It atones for a deal of income tax pounding.

Then there have been little by-products of the migration this year which could have come only because I have learned a little—things which gave me great joy.

When the Madame at last insisted on giving up her beloved Washington and moving to Boston for my sake, I insisted that she must go back for two months in the spring to be in Washington for the bird walks. So I have been hearing great stories about the walks this year, and twice when I was down I

went on the Saturday expeditions—glorious days they were, too. But the interest seemed to culminate in an attempt to see the prothonotary warbler. This is a small bird which winters in Nicaragua and breeds in southern and western states—very beautiful, seldom seen in Washington, and of course seldom seen in Boston. Its little body, greenish yellow and bluish gray, looks as if it had been taken and dipped, head, neck, and upper breast, in deep orange juice. That wonderful orange in contrast with the other colors gives it this rare beauty.

A letter from the Madame, dated May 20, 1927, contained this interesting paragraph describing a special trip to the vicinity of Mount Vernon, Va., to see this rare bird:

> I accepted an invitation from the Miners to go down to a point near Mount Vernon to look for the prothonotary warbler. . . . At last we reached the point and sat down on the tracks of the electric railroad to Mount Vernon. It was a high, narrow bank overlooking a swamp wood where the Miners had previously seen this rare warbler. Soon his notes were heard, but we sat or stood in the broiling sun fully fifteen minutes, carefully stepping off the track when cars passed, before we got a sight of him. Then we found him quietly sitting on an oak branch, lifting his head to sing every few seconds. It was a sight I shall never forget. His head and shoulders are golden, the rest grayish green.

By one of the odd coincidences of life, within forty-eight hours I myself had a prothonotary warbler to report. Coming back from Maine on a sleeper, I walked from the North Station, Boston, over Beacon Hill on a lovely May morning, and into the Public Garden. There I met a fine old citizen with field glasses. Venturing to address him (because of the early hour and the field glasses), even though we were

almost on the slopes of Beacon Hill, I was cordially received and instantly told that there was a prothonotary warbler "in the elm near the rock pile," "opposite the new Ritz Carlton Hotel," "had been seen there yesterday," "was still there." Passing the spot, I saw fifteen or sixteen of the Audubon Society in morning worship, as it were, uttering low sounds of joy. (No unseemly demonstrations in Boston.) Hurrying into my office in Newbury Street, I seized my bird glasses and went back, where I had the prothonotary all to myself. Unlike ninety-nine and forty-four one-hundredths per cent of warblers, this aristocrat did not stay in the thickest foliage on the topmost branch. He flitted down where I could see, came over to my side of the tree, dropped to the branch directly above my head, so that I had no need of glasses, the sun full on his golden color. Good little prothonotary, upholding the repute of Boston as a bird center, giving glory to the Public Garden, breaking the crust of New England reserve, and giving me such a noble Roland for my wife's Oliver. Looking up that long word, I find, what every law student knows of course, that a prothonotary is a kind of clerk in courts in England, and also a chief clerk of courts in some of our states, and an official in the papal establishment also. Why the warbler is a prothonotary I have not found out.

The Madame also wrote about an exquisite trio heard from the bedroom window of our "Fourth Floor Back" in Washington—a wood thrush, a cardinal and a robin singing all at once. That seemed hard to equal, but the next Saturday afternoon, walking in our wonderful Arboretum, I spent an hour trying to find out who it was singing a lovely song in a thicket. The singer kept out of sight—moving here and there from one tree top to the other. At last, lying flat on the ground on a steep hillside, I saw him—the most

beautiful rose-breasted grosbeak I had ever seen. Then came a Baltimore oriole singing too, and finally, across the road on the tip top of a tall tree, a brown thrasher—and this trio it seemed to me made music no other could possibly equal.

Such incidents fasten themselves to the mind so that they are not easily dislodged. They come back with calming, steadying power when men sound discords around you or you yourself are jangling all out of tune. The brown thrasher, in range, variety, beauty of his notes, is second to no song bird. Having seen him generally in August, I had heard only parts of his song. This day in the Arboretum he gave all he had, and with the rose-breast and oriole it was an adequate good-night to the setting sun, an adequate greeting to "the sublime sweet evening star."

The founder of the Lynn Bird Club, one of the leading bird banders of the country, sends me a letter as I write these words in which are these sentences: "We have had all the warblers here this season. The best song of the spring was a duet yesterday by a tanager and a rose-breasted grosbeak."

In wave on wave of melody and color, the migration has rolled over us. The thousands of birds have gone on northward. The ones that stay and nest near us are busy. They sing for us early and late. The riot of song is over for the year. But there are advantages in not having too many. We can get better acquainted with the few. And these few are more than we realize until we count them.

The migration this year has deepened the impression made by things often told me before.

It is not always the bird you see in the tree that is making the sound coming from that tree. There may be an entirely different bird in there out of sight.

Look instantly and take in everything, for that one look may be the only one you will get.

Don't try the snap judgments of the man in the street on birds, for there are two kinds as like as two peas save for a slight wrinkle on the left side of one of the peas.

Pay attention to what they say and how they say it, for sight without sound is a limping thing.

Let not your wishes be father to so many thoughts that are not so. Out for a blue grosbeak or a summer tanager—neither of which I have ever seen or will probably ever see north of Washington—I can create these birds out of common varieties.

Above all, look out for the females, for, in ornithology as in life, there is a deal of confusion caused by the ladies. The species is not learned until the female of the species is learned. And she is the very devil to get straightened out. There is only one thing worse, if it is worse, and that is the immature bird without his distinctive markings.

And what of the great flocks that have passed on to the north? In what deep valleys, in what lovely farming countries, along what water courses, in what city parks, have they made their nests? Is the denizen of Patagonia just as much at home on Paris Hill, Maine? Is the lush meadow up at the hill farm just as good a sight to the bobolink as the pampas of Argentine? Am I as friendly a figure as my brother down there with lariat and sombrero?

At any rate, it is all a part of life. Knowledge of it enriches life and makes all of us better citizens of the world. Without any loss of real patriotism, we can learn from the birds not to take frontiers too seriously.

Along the Spokes of the Hub

CHAPTER XXII

THE ARNOLD ARBORETUM

ONE of the open spots in Greater Boston to which we like to go for a walk and a breath of air is the Arnold Arboretum.

The various entrances are from three to five miles south of the State House, between Jamaica Plain and Roslindale. The Huntington Avenue cars take one to the gates in Jamaica Plain and Forest Hills, the steam cars to Forest Hills and Roslindale, and a bus to entrances along Center Street. The Boston Elevated R. R. of course serves Forest Hills also.

The Arnold Arboretum is an old farm or farms, turned into a place for the growth and display of trees and shrubs. It is held by Harvard University under a thousand year lease, and is incorporated with some restrictions into the Metropolitan Park System of Boston.

It came as a result of two bequests: Benjamin Bussey of Roxbury, a merchant, gave Harvard his Woodland Hill farm consisting of 200 acres, to establish a course of instruction in practical agriculture, useful and ornamental gardening, and botany. James Arnold of New Bedford gave to three trustees a fractional part of his estate, the sum of $103,847.57, "to be applied for the promotion of agricultural or horticultural improvement, or other philosophical or philanthropic purposes at their discretion."

The trustees made the arrangement with Harvard. Harvard found the one man above all others fitted to build up this great out-of-doors museum—the late Charles Sprague Sargent—and the beautiful Arboretum is the result.

Both of these donors did not tie up their bequests too tight, and one specifically put in a liberty clause which left his trustees free to do about as they pleased. Both of them would be delighted if they could come back to see what has happened in the last half century, and to discover how much nobler and better a thing they have builded than they ever dreamed. For that matter, so would old John Harvard, who in 1638 gave his farm for an educational institution.

What the trustees and director of the Arnold Arboretum have done is to assemble from all parts of the world every kind of tree and woody plant which would grow out of doors in the climate of Boston, spread information about these trees and plants broadcast, train a limited number of students and do an enormous work of popular education. While they have had to plant things in groups, setting the idea of study in the forefront, they have kept beauty in mind also, so that the Arnold Arboretum to-day has become one of the world's choice beauty spots.

Of course to begin with there were hills and valleys, brooks, and some wonderful pines on the site. They had something to start with, and they have made the most of it.

This is not the first Arboretum in the world. The Britannica describes several that are older. One of the finest is the "Arboretum and Royal Botanical Gardens" at Kew, England. It dates from 1762. Then there is the famous Jardin des Plantes in Paris. There are others in Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Canada. The oldest in Great Britain is in Oxford, having been started in 1632. The Arnold Arboretum, the Britannica says, "ranks with Kew. It takes its name from its donor, the friend of Emerson."

In the "Heart of Midlothian," Sir Walter Scott tells us that when the Laird of Dumbiedikes lay dying he gave his son one bit of advice, which Bacon himself

could not have bettered. "Jock," said the old reprobate, "when ye hae naething else to do, ye may be aye sticking in a tree, it will be growing, Jock, when ye're sleeping." "Sir Walter," says the Britannica, which quotes this old story, "assures us that a Scots earl took this maxim so seriously to heart that he planted a large tract of country with trees, a practise which in these days is promoted by the English and Royal Scottish Arboricultural Societies."

I have heard people argue about the relative merits of the Arnold Arboretum and Central Park, New York, or Franklin Park, Boston. As well argue about the relative merits of bread and beds. They are totally different things. There are many wild gorges in the Berkshires up which it is a pleasure to tramp—deep, dark, cool on the hottest day of summer, flecked with patches of sunshine which find their way down when the sun is overhead. Any one who loves to tramp enjoys such wild glens. But they are no good to any one who would like to study Manchurian crab-apple trees, or the exquisite Parkman crab, "the Pink Pearl of the Orient."

It is a queer type of mind that has to long for mosses and ferns when it is walking among the crab-apples in full bloom, and long for crab-apple blossoms when it is scaling the sides of Old Greylock.

"The Arboretum is too artificial," some people say. "All the different species of trees are together. I like real woods." I might observe that to some extent trees of a genus or class have to be together to be studied, and add that nature herself in her wildest mood has shown me unbroken forests of pine or maple or cedar, and then remark that this is less so in the Arboretum than one would think. Trees and bushes of one kind are together generally, but sometimes a new species like the cedar of Lebanon is set here and there to see where it will do best. And the grouping is

done with such remarkable taste and skill that one forgets that the Arboretum is an out-of-doors museum of living specimens and thinks of it as a wonderful garden or a beautiful park.

From the standpoint of tramping the Arboretum can not be despised. There are the hills the walker loves, and from at least two of them—Bussey Hill and Peters Hill—there are views over the wooded Arboretum and for miles beyond. To the southward is the range of the Blue Hills with Big Blue in command, and to the northward Boston and the Atlantic Ocean. Near by are the trains of the New Haven R. R. between Boston and New York and the trains closer in under the hill going off to Franklin, Blackstone, and the great world that way. We also can see much of Brookline, and look down the Riverway to our apartment at A. P. M. There are paths on Hemlock Hill where one can easily imagine he is walking in the forest primeval. But there are no trails cut by the Alpine Mountain Club, and if that sort of thing is what we want, it is up to us to go where it is found, and not blame the Arboretum for it.

The Arboretum exerts an influence in enlarging our minds. It gives us facts and it quickens our imagination. And throughout the season it has a succession of flower and fruit shows which feed the sense of beauty. To the general public one of the best known of these "shows" in the springtime is the blossoming of the lilacs. The Sunday when they are at their height is known as Lilac Sunday. Thousands go to see them. In New England especially the lilac is the flower associated with the earliest settlements. For generations it has bloomed in town and country. On many an abandoned farm where the buildings have gone and even the cellar walls have almost disappeared, the blossoms of the old lilac bush are the only memorials left of the generations who have lived there.

One of the astonishing things to people who visit the lilacs for the first time is the number of named varieties. They have known "purple lilacs," and "white lilacs." Here they find, says E. H. Wilson in his book on the Arboretum,* "upward of one hundred and ninety named varieties of the common lilac, nearly all the known hybrids and twenty-seven out of the thirty recognized species. It is doubtful if any other collection in the world is so complete, and moreover twenty-two of the species have been introduced into cultivation in America by the Arboretum."

Mr. Wilson gives us a vivid and beautiful picture of the many kinds of lilacs in this paragraph:

> "There are bushes great and small, some babies only a few feet high, others lusty giants full fifteen feet tall. Lilacs with snow white flowers; lilacs with pink flowers; lilacs with red and purple flowers; lilacs with blue flowers and lilacs with flowers of every known shade of purple. Lilacs with single flowers; lilacs with double flowers; lilacs with flowers in erect broad trusses a foot and more high. Lilacs with flowers more than one inch in diameter; lilacs with delightfully fragrant flowers; lilacs with scarcely any scent, and all descended from one species, the common lilac (*S. vulgaris*). In one bed may be seen three plants of the ancestral type raised from seeds gathered from wild plants discovered in Bulgaria in 1896. These bear narrow clusters of dull purple flowers and are outclassed in beauty by their descendants. Around these humble parents are grouped the choicest products of the skill of Lemoine and other plant-breeders. The contrast is amazing, and is a superb illustration of the immense possibilities potential in the most homely subject."

Crab-apples also illustrate the fact that there may be more than one kind of a thing with which

---

*"America's Greatest Garden: The Arnold Arboretum." E. H. Wilson. The Stratford Company, Boston.

we think we are perfectly familiar, and that it behooves us to look a matter up before we argue too strenuously. The Arboretum has searched the remote corners of Europe and Asia for these beautiful trees and brought back an almost unbelievable number of them.

Mr. Wilson says:

> "There are crabapples suitable for the lawn or park, for steep banks or edge of woodlands, for open places or forest glades; crabapples garlanded with myriad blossoms in the spring; crabapples brilliantly jeweled with countless fruits in autumn. Crabapples whose scented flowers are my lady's delight; crabapples whose characteristics are the artist's joy; crabapples whose wholesome fruit makes delicious preserves; crabapples whose tiny fruits save our feathered friends from starving in the depth of winter. Their beauty is indescribable, their charm irresistible. Come to the Arboretum at crabapple time."

Let me give the chapter headings of Mr. Wilson's book to indicate concisely what study one can do in the Arboretum and what a variety of things one can take delight in without much study: "What the Arboretum Is," "Spring Pageantry," "Summer Luxuriance," "Autumn Glory," "Winter Beauty," "Cherry Blossom Festival," "Crabapple Opulence," "Lilac Time," "Azalea Carnival," "Hawthorns," "Oaks and Hickories," "Rhododendrons and Mountain Laurel," "Conifers," "Climbing Plants," "Border Plantings," "Food for Feathered Friends," "The Shrub Garden," "What the Arboretum Does."

On June 8 in one of the sheltered valleys of the Arboretum, an out-door service was held in honor of Charles Sprague Sargent, professor of Arboriculture at Harvard University and founder and only director of the Arboretum. Roger Wolcott, an overseer of Harvard, and for a long time on the Board of Visitors for the Arboretum, presided. President Lowell of

Harvard, William C. Endicott of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, Mrs. John A. Stewart, Jr., president of the Garden Clubs of America, J. Horace McFarland, editor of the *Rose Annual*, and Ernest H. Wilson were the speakers. Bishop Lawrence pronounced the benediction. A little stand had been built in front of Juniper Dell, which Professor Sargent planned. A great white pine hung over the platform. Chairs were placed for the audience on the grass in front.

Behind the audience was the beautiful dark background of Hemlock Hill. Little Bussey Brook went singing on its way between speakers and hearers. The speakers were so brief and interesting that the Madame remarked that "public speaking would lose its terrors if programs were like this."

It was an ideal day—warm with a cool breeze. The laurel was just ready to burst into bloom. The last of the marvelous pink and flame and red azaleas were hanging to the bushes. A song sparrow came and sang in the oak near by—dear little bird, nothing aristocratic about it, not the most famous of singers, but always ready to fill in when the high-bred birds are out of sight, and always singing in a way to delight and inspire.

Even gruff, imperious, dominating, austere Mr. Sargent would have been melted by this out-of-doors service. And those near to him testify to the warmth of heart that lay deep in that brusque personality.

President Lowell said:

> "It is rare that any one but an artist is able to leave a material memorial of himself that endures, and it is still rarer that any one is able to leave a memorial that is the product of his whole life instead of a series of smaller and shorter ones. Professor Sargent built his own memorial but he built it without the slightest idea that it was to be a memorial of himself. He built his

thoughts into what you see before you just as much as the artist builds his thoughts into the picture that he paints with his brush.

"There is not a tree that did not have its place in his imagination before it stood in the ground as you see it to-day. The whole of this great place here is simply his mind, his thoughts, his imagination crystallized into actual shape. He thought it all out. He thought how it would look, and he built it to look as he intended that it should.

"This must remain a memorial to him. The trees may die. They may grow old. In one hundred years many will perhaps be replaced. But the general design and the general kind of plant will always be the same and they will always represent his thought.

"His great idea was the idea of a living museum. It is a great contribution, and we are wise in coming here to remind ourselves how great and how valuable it is."

Mr. Wilson, an associate of Professor Sargent's for twenty-one years, said that the spot where the meeting was held was a black impenetrable swamp when Professor Sargent began his work. The Arboretum, he said, to-day is a bit of beautiful New England forever preserved as a garden, in which is planted all that is hardy of the trees and shrubs assembled from the whole of the Northern Hemisphere. There is not a tree planted in the Arboretum that Professor Sargent did not see, and usually he staked out the position with his own hands.

The unconscious influence of an institution like the Arnold Arboretum is very great. It has undoubtedly stimulated interest in wise tree planting throughout the country, both by communities and individuals. Sometimes the movement is called conservation, and sometimes the promotion of civic beauty, sometimes it is primarily esthetic and sometimes economic, but it is all one movement. The unifying thing is that we

are taking thought for one another. "I Like a Reverent Town," by Charles Divine, emphasizes this idea:

I like a town that sees
The sacredness of trees,
Acknowledging their right
To whisper half the night,
And all the day to talk
Above a shaded walk.

I like a reverent town
That hews no tree-trunk down,
But lets it stand to know
Sidewalks around can go,
As if: "I comprehend.
You were here first, my friend!"

CHAPTER XXIII

IN THE TIME OF THE DOGWOOD

IT was 1 o'clock and a Saturday half-holiday. Some hundreds of thousands who had to work were buckling down for the afternoon. Other hundreds of thousands were homeward bound, on trains marked "Saturday only" and in motor cars which choked every boulevard and highway. One of my friends at the office had deposited me at my door and whirled off for an afternoon of tennis. It was June, with fair weather, blue skies, fleecy clouds and both sun and breeze. After the long cold rains that we had had, such a day irresistibly drew one out of doors. There were many walks that I could take, trains and trolleys headed north, east, south and west, to good starting places, but to-day I decided that my room should be my starting place.

A quick survey from my eighth-floor tower windows showed me the Muddy River and the lovely Parkway winding away southward to Jamaica Plain and Jamaica Pond, with just the tip of Peters Hill in the Arnold Arboretum showing up in the distance. To that green slope four miles away I would go, and lie down in the grass. But first I must get an easy way back. Old travelers to Europe book passage home before they book passage over. In tramping for me the ideal arrangement is "All the time in the world to go, and high speed and soft seats to come home." So I called up the Information Service of the New Haven Railroad. "Give me a train back from Roslindale between 4 and 6 p. m. to-day," I said. "You want to go to Roslindale?" a voice demanded. "No, I want to come home from Roslindale," I replied.

"Nothing doing on that line," said the voice. "Yes, hold on, 4.32 standard time, 5.32 daylight." So I had almost four hours, for fifteen minutes at the most from the top of Peters Hill would put me on that train.

It was more like summer than any day I had yet been out. The yellow warbler was singing his little song and the orioles were calling plaintively as I went down the steps from the Longwood Avenue bridge to the path along Muddy River. The deep shade was grateful—the first time this season I had chosen shade instead of sun. The hawthorns and viburnums were in blossom. The foliage on some of the trees was thick already. The last stragglers were putting out their leaves. Nothing was dirty or blasted. Will my readers in the far South and the Northwest and California understand when I say that it was "early June in New England" and on what must have been the same kind of day as that which inspired the famous tribute to June by James Russell Lowell? In my pocket I had some modern poems, and one of these expressed my thought. At first I felt selfish to be so happy.

> "To be out of the moiling street
> With its swelter and its sin!
> Who has given to me this sweet,
> And given my brother dust to eat?
> And when will his wage come in?"*

Then I looked through the trees to a Brookline playground crowded with happy children, and I crossed Washington Street, Brookline, with difficulty, for long lines of automobiles were taking whole families into the country, and I saw men starting off with golf bags, and felt better about it. The fact is many more people are financially and physically able to tramp

*Gloucester Moors, William Vaughn Moody.

out to Roslindale and pay 24 cents to come home than care to do so.

But Moody puts a real problem to us, not to be exaggerated to be sure, but not to be dismissed casually.

"But thou vast outbound ship of souls,
What harbor town for thee?
What shapes, when thy arriving tolls
Shall crowd the banks to see?
Shall all the happy shipmates then
Stand singing brotherly?
Or shall a haggard, ruthless few
Warp her over and bring her to
While the many broken souls of men
Fester down in the slaver's pen
And nothing to say or do?"

Not even the most perfect day in June in the most idyllic spot can be happy without remembering before God those who can not have such times and places, or those whose hard or soft life has blunted the capacity to enjoy.

The warbling vireo stays all summer with us, and one of these little plain birds was just bursting with melody as I went along, a wonderful red-winged blackbird settled down in the cattails, and all along the path my dear little song sparrow was singing. I must admit that young starlings also in great numbers were making less agreeable noises as they demanded "worms, bugs, for God's sake anything, quick ma, hustle, my turn, quit shoving." I could not feel as unsympathetic toward the parents with that crew to feed as perhaps I ought to, but certain it is that the starlings are multiplying too fast.

I shall always think of this walk as marked by the most beautiful dogwood I had ever seen in the North. The bulletin of the Arboretum for May 24 had said: "Rarely has there been such a display of

flowering dogwood in the Arboretum and the vicinity of Boston as at the present moment. On Long Island and southward the blossoms of this tree are an annual spectacle, but hereabouts it is only when favored by a mild winter that it flowers freely. It is a small tree, usually not over twenty-five or thirty feet tall."

In the woods of the eastern part of the United States we have *cornus florida,* white dogwood, and *cornus florida rubia,* pink dogwood. In the western part of the country they have some of the oriental species. Mr. Wilson of the Arboretum speaks of the dogwood as forming "an under story" beneath the shade of the taller trees of our forests "in rich, well drained soil from the coast well up toward the summits of the Alleghany Mountains." He also speaks of it as "rightly placed when it is on a slope rising from a pond where it can be seen across the water."

Below Jamaica Pond there is a little pond named Ward's Pond. Long ages ago glaciers scooped it out and piled debris up for banks. The dogwood on the northern side of this pond might have inspired Mr. Wilson's comment, for there stand a dozen or more trees both white and pink. Although I was there nine days after the bulletin it seemed to be still in full glory. From there on I doubt if I was ever out of sight of dogwood until I reached the train, and on the train too I had glimpses of white dogwood off to the left backed up by dark hemlocks.

Near Jamaica Pond, there was a change of scenery. Ahead stretched a beautiful greensward. There was a far wider horizon. Soon I was in sight of the curving banks and dancing surface of this lovely sheet of water. There was a good southwest breeze. The little ducks were bobbing up and down like surf boats. The majestic swans sailed in like liners. At rest or in movement the surface of such a body of water is peaceful and tranquillizing. "It rests one to

look at it," remarks many an average person, not knowing in the slightest why it rests one. Nor do I know more than in part. Perhaps the sight releases something in us which we have been hanging on to as important. Some old tenseness, of which we may have been unconscious, may be is ended. Perhaps the quiet lake or pond expresses for us a deep longing, and expression always helps. Perhaps there is a feeling down so deep that we are hardly conscious of it, that the hand which holds these quiet waters holds us too. Sometimes a poor tortured soul is too far gone and the waters call, and so life ends. But for the majority in the calm surface of the little lake there is rest and healing.

Under the oaks along the shore of the pond past the boat-house and refreshment stand where nursemaids and parents and children congregate, with more views of lovely pink dogwood across the water, on to the upper or southern side, where Pond Street goes off. The walk now was past half a dozen of the beautiful homes of Jamaica Plain to the Arborway. These houses on Pond Street all have lawns and trees of their own and acres of city property to look at. One of them was surrounded by horse-chestnuts in full bloom, mostly white but one pink. Upper Thirteenth Street, Washington, is bordered by white horse-chestnuts. On the Champs Elysees, Paris, white and pink horse-chestnuts have been set alternately. A pink horse-chestnut is one of the sights of Lafayette Park, Washington, whenever it is in bloom. With its rounding top, its dark green leaves and striking blossoms, the horse-chestnut is a showy tree.

Just after the Providence Road turns off the Arborway, we reach the Jamaica Plain gate of the Arboretum—just an hour from home without hurrying. We can afford to loaf now through a happy afternoon. In the Arboretum all guess-work about the trees

comes to an end, for they all are marked. With a little judicious copying of labels and study of Sargent's or Wilson's book, what a reputation for wisdom a writer might easily earn.

I sat down on an old gray boulder under a shagback hickory, and wrote a note to the Madame in Washington.

The pheasant crowing at me from a near-by thicket, the high-bush huckleberry at my feet in full bloom, the sun and breeze and birds and flowers and trees, all were put into the letter and sealed up in an envelope to be sent off to Washington, but there seemed to be a good store of everything left.

More horse-chestnuts, more hickories, more blueberries, innumerable bushes I did not know, a wretched smelling viburnum, and then I began to climb. Bussey Hill is the show place of the Arboretum. Here are the Japanese cherries, the crab-apples, the azaleas. Here also is a view on toward Peters Hill, where I was going, down to Hemlock Hill, off to the Blue Hills, and back the way I had come.

The azaleas along the Riverway near our home were almost gone, the azaleas on Bussey Hill were still in their glory.

Of one species, kaempfers azalea (*rhododendron obtusum kaempferi*), the common mountain variety of Japan, great numbers had been massed at the foot of three or four very tall old white pines, which had only a few limbs left on them, but which were models for an artist. Often I find views hard to describe. Often too I come upon things in nature deeply moving. But seldom if ever have I seen a contrast more startling than here, where I found masses of this flame-colored flower from the Orient at the foot of the most beautiful but somber of American trees. Mr. Wilson, the present head of the Arboretum, says that "of all shrubs that Japan has contributed to the gardens of

North America none is more strikingly handsome than this flaming Torch Azalea." Professor Sargent introduced it in 1892 through seeds sent from Japan. "Had he done nothing else but introduce this plant," says Mr. Wilson, "garden lovers would have just cause to bless his name."

The pinxter of my boyhood, the flame azalea of the Appalachian Mountains, and many others native and foreign, were blooming, had bloomed or were soon to bloom. This azalea exhibition starts in May and runs on into July. Pink, rose, yellow, white, red, orange, crimson—nearly all the species are here. The principal collection is on Bussey Hill, but they have been planted along the roads and in dense woods all through the Arboretum. One can not walk anywhere at this season in the Arboretum without running into some exquisite clump of azaleas.

If they had been known in Palestine one would be sure that it was an azalea which Moses saw on Mount Horeb. One can be sure after seeing these masses of flaming color that in the history of mankind there have been "burning bushes," "which are not consumed," "where the angel of the Lord appears," and "where God calls out of the midst of the bush."

A little walk on Hemlock Hill, a little stop under the cedars of Lebanon in the heat of the day, the first of the rhododendrons, then the green open slope of Peters Hill and a long rest at the top.

Now I could see why I can look to the top of Peters Hill from my tower room, for there stood the group of buildings where we make our Boston home. There too were Boston and Cambridge and Charlestown and the harbor and places up and down the coast.

The other way were heights covered with great estates or lovely suburban houses, and the Blue Hills off to the south and east smiling in the sunshine. The city of Boston showed above a line of lower hills,

curved around their sides, boldly crowned their summits, came on advancing like an army this side of the hills.

Whenever one is able to climb where he can look off upon a great city as a whole, the many and diverse impressions the city has been making upon him as he has traversed its streets fall into a kind of order. He is reminded of the countless services performed by which he lives. Yonder come the great ships, and with the glass I see a trader slipping quietly in. Here are the railroads—east, west, north or south—broad highways are there also, with men coming and going every hour of the day.

And what are they doing? Handling little pieces of paper which stand for wealth and power, buying and selling houses and lands and food and clothing, healing the sick, welcoming little babies, laying away the dead. Beneath the shining roofs are priceless paintings, great stores of books, laboratories where all manner of new things are coming to life. The criminal is there and his pursuer, the libertine and his victim, the judge on the bench, the lawmaker under the golden dome.

We shall never list the activities of a great city, or describe adequately its swirling life. Calm, quiet, united, beautiful, it lay under the afternoon sun. Over it curved the dome of heaven, just as when the first settler climbed Beacon Hill and built his little shack.

With the evidences all about of incessant change, there were the symbols of things that do not pass away

CHAPTER XXIV

THE THORNS AND THE CRAB-APPLES

AS the office closed for the day, some one remarked that this was the last week of daylight saving. Although the editor is not bound down to a 9 to 5 schedule, he suddenly had a feeling that he was letting something precious slip away. And so he was. As he emerged from the Headquarters Building for the first time since morning, he saw that he was missing one of those days of early autumn when everything seems bathed in golden light all day long. It did not take him long to decide on a walk. It should be the Arboretum to see the crab-apples. And as A. P. was starting for home on the 5.30 train, and as he lived near Roslindale on the far side of the Arboretum, nothing was simpler than to wheel in one's tracks quickly and annex oneself to him. A. P. was the precipitate which resolved the mixture of thoughts and brought a decision.

In a little over seven minutes we had made the seven miles, A. P. had gone on to his home at Bellevue, a mile farther, and I was walking up the hill at Roslindale with the other commuters, aping so far as I could the manner of one who belonged and not one who was a tourist.

Roslindale lay quiet and peaceful in the late afternoon sun. One householder was washing windows and had to submit to a good-natured chaffing from neighbors who came out with me on the 5.30. Another was oiling his car. A third was trimming his bushes.

Children were coming home from play. A black police dog running along a high bank above the

children he unmistakably adored was pretending to great ferocity.

Every house had its lawn and garden—nearly every one had its vines and flowers. A dozen or more had the large showy bush hydrangea, two had porches just covered with clematis in full bloom, one had a magnificent bed of scarlet sage along the side of the house, with snowdrops in front. Others had many varieties—gladioli, scarlet geraniums and cannas. And there was one Easter lily with three blossoms—worth a dollar a blossom a few months hence, hardly ten cents now, but just as beautiful now as when the price goes up.

There is an old graveyard dating from the American Revolution, long uncared for, now apparently taken over by the Arboretum. Some one at any rate has planted young trees among the few crumbling stones, and it will not be long before the old soldiers will lie in a beautiful grove instead of in a brier patch.

At the top of the rough stone steps by which I entered there is a boulder with this inscription set into it:

> In memory of the soldiers of the Revolution who died in the hospitals at Jamaica Plain and were buried in this lot 1775-1776. Erected by the Massachusetts Society Sons of the American Revolution, 1903.

Entering from Roslindale is like coming in the back door of the Arboretum. It also is like starting at the top of the mountain and making the descent. When one gets to the end of the street one is near the top of Peters Hill, the highest point of the Arboretum. Though there are old trees on one side of the hill and young trees on the lower slopes, the top of the hill is bare and the view is unobstructed. Behind one and to the south, over Roslindale, are the Blue Hills showing up. Straight ahead to the north and northeast is a curving line of dark wooded slopes, up through

which here and there the city suburbs lift themselves. Beyond these slopes and suburbs there rise the hills of Brookline and the towers and spires of that old Boston for which the men who have lain so long in the old graveyard fought bravely 152 years ago. They were sick or wounded, and were carried out to Jamaica Plain, back to the rear, and a healthful place. It gave them a chance for life, but that was long before antiseptic surgery, long before the germ theory of disease, and our anti-toxins, and only the luckiest and sturdiest could survive if anything serious was the matter. Even their great commander a few years later was to die of an illness which recently kept the editor from his work less than a week.

Nearer by, under foot, there was something which brought one's attention back even from the lovely view of old Boston bathed in the setting sun. It was a lawn of purple asters—the Massachusetts aster I think the exact title is. I never can be really sure when the Madame is not there, unless it is a dandelion or buttercup or some other flower of childhood. But even at that one is a bit timid when he discovers half a hundred kinds of sparrows and half a hundred kinds of goldenrod. The grass had been mowed and the asters had bloomed on the short stems they had sent up after the mowing. The ground all down the side of the hill was a carpet of purple blossoms.

I did not have time to look for the birds, but the juncos and catbirds came to look at me and evidently what they saw displeased them, for there was loud swearing about it. How did I know it was directed at me? No editor can possibly be mistaken about being called names or sworn at. He is a specialist. There was no good reason for swearing at me. But that does not matter with jays or with men. Only it's more fun when the jays do it out in the glad sunshine of a September afternoon.

In visiting the Arboretum one learns to take one thing at a time. There is so much to study that for the average man it is confusing. The Bulletin of Popular Information renders a great service. Published once or twice a week during the season when things are happening most frequently, it keeps subscribers in touch. One is not apt to miss the height of the cherry blossoms, or crab-apples, or lilacs, or azaleas, or whatever it may be that is the center of attention on any special week.

The bulletin of July 30, for example, began with this sentence: "The season of flowers on tree and shrub is now fast approaching its end, and brightly colored fruits are beginning to display themselves." That one sentence was a signal to a busy man to watch out.

On Labor Day the Madame and I went out especially to see the "thorns," or "hawthorns," or "thorn apples," as we used to call them in childhood. The botanical name is *Crataegus*, and there are from fifty to seventy species in the genus.

There are many especially beautiful specimens of *Crataegus* along the wall of the Arboretum between Forest Glen and Jamaica Plain. They do not much resemble the thickets in which I tore my clothing in childhood picking thorn apples. But they are one family.

The thorn trees, or the haws, as they are called commonly, are found in rough and stony pastures. Other trees which spring up are bitten off by cattle, and only the armored trees or bitter shoots are left.

Scientists do not agree as to whether trees develop thorns for protection or whether they come from a life of hardship. In one of her nature books Maud Going points out the fact that orange trees abandoned develop thorns, and quotes Darwin, who says, "the pear tree when wild bears thorns which consist

of branches in a rudimentary condition." She adds, "Thorns have no place in Edens of plenty and peace, but belong to states of struggle and adversity." The same thing often is true of human beings. Thorny, sharp, prickly individuals may have had struggles which account for their attitude. Unfortunately thorns in character do not, as in the case of trees and bushes, serve to protect against future adversities. They work just the other way.

When one starts studying the history of a single genus of plants he is led into all kinds of beautiful lanes.

There are all the poems which have been written about the sweet-scented English hawthorn. How the early settlers missed the hedgerows of old England.

What legends, pagan and Christian, cluster about it. The Greeks regarded the hawthorn as the emblem of hope, and it decked the marriage altar. The Christian preserved the tradition that from it was made the crown of thorns for the crucifixion.

Near almost every ruined monastery in Europe may be found a thorn tree. Most famous of all is the Glastonbury thorn, which originally, tradition says, was the staff of Joseph of Arimathea.

The crab-apple—the *Pyrus Malus*—which I observed especially on this later walk, both spring and fall furnishes one of the exhibitions of the Arboretum. One of the best collections is at the foot of Peters Hill. From all over the temperate zones the trees seem to have come. The Asiatic crab-apples "are not exceeded in beauty and hardiness by any tribe of plants, and yet they are comparatively rare in American gardens." The Arboretum, which is responsible for this statement, is doing a great work to induce us to plant this beautiful tree. Every shade from rose pink to white may be found in the blossoms, and there is even greater variety in the fruit. The colors range from greenish red to

crimson, and some are yellow or red and yellow. In size they run from the size of peas up to the size of marbles or glass alleys.

One of the crab-apples at the foot of Peters Hill which always attracts attention, is *Malus Sargentii.* Wilson, in "America's Greatest Garden," speaks of it as the "pigmy of the crab-apple family—a low, broad, densely branched shrub which hugs the ground and is pre-eminently suited for planting on banks. From the salt marshes of Hokkaido, the northernmost island of Japan, came this gem, discovered and introduced and fittingly named for the man who brought the Arboretum into being some fifty years ago"—and who laid down his task less than a year ago.

One great difference between the spring show and the fall show of the crab-apple is that one is over in a week and the other goes on into the winter. Another difference is that the fall show draws the birds, and some of them live on the crab-apple for months.

A more subtle difference is that one speaks of promise and the other of fulfilment. We never tire of the promise of springtime. Many a time some of us would sink down if there were not this yearly quickening of hope. But there is equal satisfaction in things maturing. They may not be all we want, but they are the realization of hope.

There are things like youth and beauty which belong only to the springtime of life, but there are things of patience and endurance which come only as the fruits of character mature. At our best we try to live up to Browning:

"The best is yet to be,
The last of life for which the first was made;
Our times are in His hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God; see all nor be afraid."

Of American crab-apples there are eight main species—all represented in the Arboretum.

I wish I knew the name of the crab-apple in grandmother's garden where I went as a boy to pick enough for my mother to make jelly. Perhaps it is sentiment, but no jelly to-day pleases me as much as crab-apple. I like them all—grape, plum, currant, quince, blackberry, raspberry, strawberry—but it is the crab-apple which takes me back irresistibly to the large, leaning tree on the lawn near the well-house, heavily laden with the yellow fruit with exquisite red cheeks. They were larger and better than the crab-apples on our tree, easier for mother to prepare, easier for me to pick. And as I was rather small in those days, grandmother usually came out to advise and help. The light that falls on spotless linen through beautiful crab-apple jelly is not more rosy or beautiful than the light which falls on those old days, when our street was the greatest street in the world, and my early life was blessed by happy companionships which took in three of the generations ahead of me.

There is a careless usage by which men say crab-apple when they mean any small, sour, hard apple not much good for anything. From this they get the adjective crabbed, to apply to mean, hard, sour people.

This may not be slovenly English, but it is unjust usage.

From bud to fruitage the crab-apple is a thing of beauty, and, in proportion to its beauty, of utility.

Even if we have no memories as a background against which to see it, common gratitude should make us gentle toward it. It is the ancestor of all our apples. From the original crabs of northern Asia have come our five thousand or more varieties of apples. Every luscious MacIntosh red, every spy

and greening, goes back to the crab of the wind-swept plains of the old world.

One can not indulge in such reflections without limit, as he pauses at the foot of Peters Hill, for the rules for visitors are from sunrise to sunset, and the sun reaches the horizon at last even in weeks of daylight saving.

There was the Bussey Street gate near by for an exit, and then the walk along the road to Forest Hills.

Passing the South Street gate one could look between Hemlock Hill and Bussey Hill to a golden sunset.

One did not mind the additional walk at such an hour of such a day. Even waiting for the trolley was not a hardship. The sunset came on over the hill which hid it, by means of innumerable fleecy little clouds clear to the zenith—all washed in silver and tipped with gold. Northward, the way I was to go, over blocks of dingy city buildings were other clouds which would have been dark if they too had not been transmuted by golden light. After an hour in the Arboretum one can believe in the messages God always is writing for His children "in earth and sky and sea."

CHAPTER XXV

THE CALL OF THE BLUE HILLS

ALL winter the Big Blue Hill has been calling. From our "Eighth Floor Front" we can look southward past a corner of the building and see the upper half of "Big Blue," with the Weather Bureau tower sticking up against the sky line. Parker Hill, close by to the southeast of us, cuts off the view of the ridge of which the Big Blue Hill is a part. But Big Blue, except at night or in thick weather, has been with us every day, plainly to be seen from the easy chair in the bay window—all the effort involved merely to lift one's eyes. Sometimes he has been etched as clearly as a copperplate engraving. At other times he has been a gray shadow in the fog. And then again filmy bits of mist, "trailing clouds of glory," have been curled about his clear blue sides, adorning without obscuring the beautiful hill.

The Madame, who has much better eyes, can see him on clear moonlight nights. So can I too, but I am inclined to think it is with the imagination and not the physical sight. However many the miles may be one can actually see out across a glorious landscape on the night of the full moon, there are many miles more that most of us can see with the inner sight.

The Blue Hills lie in the town of Milton, about ten miles south of the Boston State House. They are only five or six hundred feet high, but, rising from sea level and being fairly steep, they seem much higher. Big Blue is 635 feet high.

Denizens of our great cities who were born in the country well know what I mean by the call of the

hills. Especially those who from earliest years have loved the upper solitudes, the steep woods, the high pastures and deep gorges between the hills, the rocks where wild sheep or goats love to clamber—have times when it seems imperative to seek the hills to release something deep down in the soul.

Such a day came to me the past week. It was April with all that April means of longing. One day ended in a driving snow storm. The next day dawned "like a clear May morning." When we went to bed the sleet was driving hard against the window panes. When we woke up the rain had melted all the snow, the clouds had gone and the sun was lighting up the tops of the maples, which were red with the new buds.

Until about noon I stood the pressure. I started an editorial, but it did not go. I began on a "Cruising Casual and Carefree," but it was a hodge-podge. I tried to get at some accumulated contributions, but I soon saw I was in no mood to be fair to these brain children of other people. As a last resort I tried to read, but I had no heart for it. I felt the call of the wild.

From long experience I knew that it was fatal in such a mood to hesitate, for a dozen things would pop up which "one ought not to leave." So I dashed out under pretense of important business, and telephoned back from the South Station that I would not return.

On the map I had discovered a place called West Quincy, apparently close to the Blue Hills, and on the time-table I had found a 12.15 train on the New Haven Road which stopped there. With no directions, no idea of the choice views, no information about trails, no compass but the sun, I proposed to go the entire length of the Blue Hills and land on Big Blue for a climax.

That is what I did between 12 and 6, and better

afternoon no man ever had. From the moment we emerged from the dark train shed into the glorious light of noonday, the expedition was a success. Workmen lay about corners of the railroad yards on piles of ties or against sun-warmed walls, eating their lunches. We were on the Braintree line, which follows the harbor southward for two or three miles, then turns more to the west over salt meadows to the firm ground of Milton. We crossed a river about five miles out—the Neponset just as it reaches the sea—and from the bridge we caught our first glimpse of the Blue Hills stretching in a long line something like the Catskills seen from the Hudson—only not so high. We passed a place called "Atlantic," where some sect of Christians advertised that "Jesus is the light of the world," but the effect was dimmed by other signs advertising "Duz," "Hathaway's Bread," "O'Sullivan's Heels," and a brand of cigarettes also described as the light of the world, or light of life, or something of that sort.

The Master does not need bill-board propaganda. His cause is better off without it.

At East Milton most of the passengers left us. At West Quincy, eight and six-tenths miles from the South Station, I descended, too. A long line of derricks and a high bank of quarry debris shut off all view of the way I wanted to go. A New England country village of the old time, plus a community of foreign laborers, plus the beginnings of a summer residence region, stretched along a main street. The little places had gardens, and sturdy citizens were dropping early peas in mellow soil.

I soon got my bearings and found that the street was the highway to Plymouth, and that the derricks belonged to the world-famous granite quarries of Quincy. After an animated colloquy in a garage between two equally friendly men, one of whom insisted

it was a right turn I ought to take and the other a left turn, I turned the protagonist for left around so that he could agree, and started off. Soon I faced a sign—"Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Metropolitan Park System. Furnace Brook Parkway"—and just beyond another—"Blue Hills Reservation. Wampatuck Road to Randolph Avenue." Furnace Brook, if that be its name, was full and overflowing—and along its swampy banks grass was green and skunk cabbage was coming up.

The noises of West Quincy soon were left behind or mellowed by distance, and there was no sound but rippling water and a strange wild note of a bird I did not know, and the plaintive little note of the bluebird. Sitting in the warm sunshine—not a soul about—one did not care whether he climbed the ridge or not. One was simply amazed that in the Metropolitan area of Boston he was so soon alone, and apparently in so vast a wilderness. Following the road winding on up and up, I came to a sign, "To the Crags." That seemed curious, for it was all crags. The whole reservation seemed to be dense woods of oak and maple, in which white pines had been set and were coming bravely, with boulders or slabs or outcroppings of granite everywhere. But to the Crags first I climbed, and it was "jolly worth while," as the Englishman puts it.

The Crags are gigantic granite heights made of ledges tilted and of huge pieces piled up until the tops command a view of the country round. Jagged and barren as it was, a few gnarled pines and a few scrubby bushes had found foothold. The wind was cold on the Crags, but the sun was hot, and one had only to drop down behind a huge boulder and brace his back against a little pine to have all the comforts of home.

The view was dominated by thousands of acres of

forest on all sides—mainly brown with the dead leaves of oaks, a few old pines sticking up here and there, and young pines beginning to show under the oaks. One could easily look at nothing but woods, see no sign of a human habitation, if he would forget the far rim of the view. But the rim was there—of distant hills, and salt sea, and villages and cities all along it on both seaward and landward sides. A tiny white speck in the harbor showed up in my field glasses as an ocean liner with two stacks, moving majestically to her dock. The shining speck proved to be the Golden Dome. With that located, everything else in Boston, in Brookline, in Cambridge, in Charlestown, fell into its proper place in the cosmos. The south side of Boston showed up the best, of course—Roxbury and Dorchester—and around on the other side of the Crags were Quincy and parts of Braintree and other communities I did not know. The view up and down the harbor and out to sea was the most extensive I ever had in these parts—with the glasses one could bring island after island fairly near, and many lighthouses gleaming white in the sunlight. The Crags showed me the ridge of the Blue Hills with Big Blue just peeping out around the shoulder of Mt. Chickatawbut. That was my route.

It was a strange way that I traveled. I took the highways and the byways—my course now a few points to the right of the sun, and then a few points to the left, but never away from this beacon. When the sun is visible one does not need any other compass. If one knows that his course is westerly and that it is afternoon he ought to be able to steer fairly straight. For two hours I met no one. Then I came out on "Administration Road" just as a runner in blue trunks and white shirt jogged past, evidently training for a "Marathon." "Wonderful day," he called, and disappeared around the curve.

In the marshes and little ponds the hylas and the frogs were giving their welcome spring notes. There were some fascinating signs at the intersections of roads and trails: "To Pine Tree Brook Entrance," "To Sawcut Notch Road," "Doe Hollow Path," "Cool Hollow Path by way of Wildcat Notch," "Sky Line Trail," "To Hoosicwhisick Pond."

To my surprise I came down to a trolley road, which I found was the Mattapan-Brockton road, one of the good ways to reach the reservation. Near here a forester was handling bunches of tiny, long leaf white pine trees, laying them in the damp grass near a brook. He told me that he had 35,000 trees there, and that another gang had 40,000. Later, when I came up with this gang and entered into conversation, I surprised them with the good guess I could make about the number in the pile. "We have not money enough for the park," said the men. "We ought to cut out the brush before we set these pines, but we have not labor enough." Probably that is true, but no oak or maple can choke the thousands of thrifty white pines I saw which had a three or four year start.

At last I found myself on the road from Milton Lower Mills to Canton at the base of Big Blue, and turned up the trail to Wildcat Notch—the home stretch of the tramp. There were no wildcats up this path—not even a bird—just one little swampy place where the hylas were peeping for all they were worth. Had John Burroughs been along, what interesting things he could have told me about the hylas —what birds, too, he would have seen where I saw none!

When I was up on Big Blue three years ago, I realized the majesty of the far views, but the little lakes or ponds on the east side were frozen over and I had not realized they were there. This April day

they showed up in all their loveliness—irregular outline, pine covered shores, sparkling blue waters. They are called Houghton's Pond, or Hoosicwhisick, and Ponkapog.

The Appalachian Mountain Club has a camp on the latter, reached by motor or by bus from Mattapan. The far-reaching view of the country up toward Worcester, down toward Plymouth, out ahead over Readville and Hyde Park to dim blue regions in the north, and back toward Boston, I have already suggested. I have neither space nor talent for a description. It is a noble, far-stretching view of an area called the Hub, but which is seen here clearly to be the last call before the coast of Spain.

The brains and public spirit in that area which could take in time the five thousand acres of this wild bit of country and create of them a park for all the people and for all time to come, I never can praise enough. I stopped again at the memorials to Abbott Lawrence Rotch, "Pioneer in the Study of the Upper Air," and to Charles Eliot, landscape architect, who helped make the park.

Descending to the Canton Avenue side, I dropped down on a bench to wait for a bus. In a few minutes a man emerged noiselessly from the woods on the trail over which I had come and dropped down beside me. His coat and sweater were in a knapsack and he was in tramping garb. In the most natural way we entered into conversation, each taking the other for granted.

He told me that he was a broker and that in tramping he found his "release." "Men have to have some release," he said, "from the social system they have fastened on their backs. Tension gets too great. Some men have nervous prostration. Some commit suicide. Some desert their families and run off with another man's wife. Some drink. In one way or

another they have to loosen the tension we live under. I do it this way."

I saw that I had come in contact with an unusual man, and encouraged him to talk. The bus came and we went to Mattapan, and by trolley to Egleston Square, and by Elevated on into town, but I hardly realized the changes. Here was a man who liked what I liked and felt as I felt, and was putting it into clear-cut English. "It is not only the release which I find in the woods," he said, "I find that in the woods men take other men for what they are, and want other men to take them for what they are, and not for any position they hold. If I go to a bank president to borrow money, unconsciously he thinks of himself as a bank president and so do I. When we meet in society he and I both deal with one another on the basis of some artificial thing. Out in the woods this drops off and we think of a man as a man. International matters and church relationships will have to get on to this kind of human basis if we are to make progress."

Rather diffidently my new found friend spoke of a third reason for spending all the time he could in the open. He told me that I would find it put better than he could put it in the Introduction to "A Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf," by John Muir. In his younger days John Muir planned a nature walk which would take him through the Southern States, the West Indies, Europe and South America, "a botanical journey for years." But he injured his right eye and for months was threatened with complete loss of sight.

"During the long days of his confinement in a dark room," says Bade, "he had opportunity for much reflection. He concluded that life was too brief and uncertain, and time too precious to waste upon belts and saws, that while he was pottering in a wagon

factory, God was making a world; and he determined that if his eyesight was spared he would devote the remainder of his life to a study of the process."

The substance of this chapter in the life of John Muir my friend gave to me as we came in on the car. A man out of the rush and roar of the financial district of Boston interpreted for me the thing I had been doing that lovely April day.

To me it was a lucky meeting. He is one of the active members of the committee of the Appalachian Mountain Club, which has been doing such far-reaching work in blazing trails in the past few years. He gave me many suggestions for future walks, told me about the fascinating new trails in the Blue Hills and how to strike them.

All the afternoon he had been following the Skyline Trail which he had helped lay out. I had been blundering through the woods here and there, or over the roads, steering by the sun. Almost side by side we must have stood when we started, for he took the 12.20 to Readville while I took the 12.15 to West Quincy. But the trails had crossed toward the close of the day.

It is these people who still are coming down the road to meet us, or who are traveling the same way on converging trails, that give unending piquancy and variety to life.

CHAPTER XXVI

AN ALL DAY TRIP IN AGAWAM

THE most delightful things often are waiting for us just around the corner, and we miss them because we can not make ourselves go look for them.

The Brookline Bird Club recently announced an all day field excursion to Ipswich, or, as the Indians called it, Agawam. Although I had a free day, and was physically able to take the long walk, inertia almost prevented. Probably the main reason for my disinclination was the fact that I did not know any one who was going, and therefore I had a natural human dislike of spending a few leisure hours on company tension with strangers.

Here is a truthful list of the agencies which united to break down "trip resistance."

(*a*) A map of Eastern Massachusetts which showed Ipswich, twenty-seven miles northeast of Boston on the sea coast. Tramping east one could hit Pigeon Cove, north Newburyport, west Lowell and south Salem. Making a wide circle one could climb Crane Neck Hill, Bald Pate Hill, Turkey Hill and other hills with equally fascinating names.

(*b*) The Encyclopedia Britannica, which made one realize that here is no rural suburb of "the Hub," but its ancient equal and rival. "In wealth and influence (in the seventeenth century) little inferior to Boston, whose policies it not infrequently opposed." In literary reputation also it seems to have equaled Boston. Among others, it proudly cherished the Rev. Nathaniel Ward, who in 1647 wrote "The Simple Cobbler of Aggawam in America, Willing to Help

Mend His Country, lamentably tattered both in the upper-Leather and the Sole."

(*c*) The club bulletin, which described the trip as a "walk *via* Town Hill to Clark's Pond and Little Neck; boat to Plum Island."

Map, encyclopedia and bulletin, and especially the old minister who had been in his grave 276 years, made me want to go. The living of Ipswich might be an uncertain quantity. The dead were all right.

It was a beautiful morning for a trip. Up betimes and down at the North Station before the bird people assembled, I went through the gates and up to the head car without connecting with them. All alone I watched the swift change of scene from city to country, from the scores of tracks in Cambridge and Somerville to the salt meadows beyond Chelsea, and then the beautiful old apple trees between Lynn and Salem and Beverly and Hamilton. Until the apple trees of New England bloom one never realizes how many there are. But when it is "apple blossom time in Normandy" or in Oregon or in Massachusetts, even the oldest, most weather-beaten and crooked tree becomes glorious. And here they had been planted close to the railroad tracks, or else the railroad surveyors had run the Ipswich line through a series of apple orchards and over a succession of little bays.

To the right of the train was the salt water, to the left the hill pastures and the woods. The leaves of the oaks and elms were only partly out. Dark clumps of cedar and occasional beautiful pines showed up among the deciduous trees. Now and then a bit of breeze hit an orchard as we passed, and we saw a shower of white petals. It was the end of the apple blossoms—it was the beginning of the lilacs.

At Ipswich isolation ended. From undistinguished passengers traveling in two or three different

coaches, from motorists who suddenly dropped out of the hurrying procession on the pike, a tramping party created itself. All belonged to the Brookline Bird Club, but six came from Worcester, and others from Melrose, Malden, Newton, Watertown, Winchester, and other places. The leader was the librarian of the city of Waltham. I think I was the only person from Brookline.

Those who did not want the morning walk took motor cars to Clark's Pond, where they rested and leisurely studied shore birds until time to take the 1.30 boat to Plum Island. The rest of us started up through quaint old Ipswich, of which I saw enough to make me determined some day to see more. Strangeness, reserve, constraint, little by little wore off. The president of the club I knew, and that was a good start. He is a teacher, an author, a lecturer, but first of all an out-of-doors man. One can easily see by the articles which he is contributing monthly to the religious weeklies that he has more than a book knowledge of nature. "The Judge," to whom I had no desire to speak lest I seem to be scraping an acquaintance with a celebrity, soon was dropping easily to my side on the grass when we rested and chatting like an old friend. The leader was "putting himself out" to see that the less experienced observers did not miss the main things. Traditional New England reserve was more in evidence with the ladies, but it was a kind and self-respecting reserve which made everybody feel he was free to walk where he chose and talk or not talk. And the last vestiges of what might be called reserve disappeared when the chat, a rare bird in New England, was found sitting in plain sight on a bare branch near a little pond. I had often chased the chat down along the Potomac, getting nothing for my pains but a "chut," "chut," from the thicket just beyond. Here he stayed in plain sight until we could

put our glasses on him—his yellow breast and olive back plainly visible.

All the kinds of people which make such parties so interesting were represented—those concentrated on the quest, those interested mainly in the outing, those who kept their eyes up for birds, those who kept their eyes down for rare plants or flowers, those who naturally were skeptical and demanded incontrovertible evidence, those who had "the will to believe," those who plunged into thickets to seek until they found, and those who were willing more often "to loaf and invite their souls."

Before long we were on a hill top and could look back over the village to the irregular shore line, the outlying islands and wide expanses of water. The walk was over grassy roads or lanes, past many little ponds, along the edges of woods or thickets, down to the edge of what seemed to be a main cemetery, and away again through the woods to a poor little cemetery where nearly all the names were Greek or Polish. But in big cemetery and little, above graves marked with granite monuments and with wooden crosses, there were flowers, and many people were out decorating graves—whole families in the poor little cemetery. Two little black-eyed boys were helping their father arrange lilacs above a new-made grave. It seemed to be the grave of their mother.

Easily the most beautiful thing in bloom this morning was a crooked wild plum near one of these cemeteries, so bent over a great gray boulder that it almost seemed as if it were growing out of the rock. No canvas that I have seen ever carried such a picture, but I shall carry it with me always.

In this part of the walk there were more rose-breasted grosbeaks than I ever saw before, and frequently they were singing. A gray-cheeked thrush and an olive-sided fly-catcher ranked with the chat

as rare finds. The chewink was singing all through the woods, but nobody said chewink, all said towhee. Bobolinks also were singing in a beautiful meadow, reminding me of ten days before when I had seen a migration of a hundred or more in the fields near the Maryland State University.

Easily the climax of the morning walk was a rest of ten minutes on the top of Town Hill before we started for the seashore and the boat landing three or four miles away. The sun was warm, the grass was soft, the sea was shining in the distance, and Plum Island, where we were going, half a mile or more off shore, stretched up the coast as far as we could see. We could look across Plum Island to the open Atlantic. Double distilled essences of New England were presented to us here—no matter which way we turned.

Near us as we lay on the ground was the bungalow of an artist who has been especially kind to the members of the club. Of all the spots dear to the old members of the club from long association, said the president, none quite comes up to this hill. "If we could have a club house as a headquarters," he added, "many of us would like it here."

Going down the hill and across the meadows near the highway we walked over millions of bluets, all white, and many purple violets. Our leader called us back to see one or two specimens of the yellow dog-tooth violet—not a violet but a lily—picked so constantly that it is almost extinct.

Soon we were on a road built over swamp and sedge which led out to the seashore. Trees and thickets were left behind. We began to put our glasses on gulls, marsh hawks, terns, sandpipers and plovers. It was 12.30 when we topped a rise with two miles still to go to the place where a boat had agreed to pick us up. The president of the club an-

nounced his disinclination to proceed farther without food, and so a dozen of us dropped down and pulled out our sandwiches. Not a soul called our attention *to the sand which was there*—a record.

All the swallows expected showed up one by one—barn, tree, eave and bank, besides innumerable swifts. Then began also a long series of plovers and sandpipers, and one prairie horned lark. These people could tell the difference between the least sandpiper and the semi-palmated, but, as one of them explained, it was "more where they were than how they were marked"—the "semi-palmated" always near the surf, the "least" sometimes back along the salt meadows. Several compact flocks of these cheery, twittering little birds circled back and forth as we ate lunch. Said the president of the club: "They are about as suggestive and stirring a bird sight as I know."

Speaking especially of the "semi-palmated," Chapman says: "The thought of these little sandpipers always creates a mental picture of a long stretch of dazzling beach, with its ever changing surf line. I hear the oft-repeated booming of the rolling, tumbling breakers, and in the distance see a group of tiny forms, hurrying to and fro over the sand smoothed by the frothy waves. With what nimble gracefulness they follow the receding waves, searching for treasures cast up by the sea. . . . Now advancing, now retreating, sometimes in their eagerness venturing too far, when the waters threaten to engulf them and in momentary confusion they take wing."

A series of that kind of pictures marked the afternoon. To Little Neck, the hilly end of the peninsula which we were on, there clung twenty or thirty summer camps, and on the soft grass by one of them we lay down to wait for the boat. Some went off to find ice cream cones, some pulled out supplementary sandwiches, some played with three agreeable chil-

dren and their very agreeable dog, and all got a drink (of water).

The boat was a motor launch built to carry seventy-five and able to land on a beach. The boatman had a step-ladder for ladies to use on beach landings. He had three life preservers which he piled up as a step for ladies at dock landings. He was a cheery boatman, willing to stop and embark or disembark passengers anywhere—only late in the day I heard him mutter that he would have to "keep book" about where he had landed some of these people or he might forget to go back after them. Down the Ipswich River, into the Plum Island Ship Channel, as it is called on the old maps, up on to a hard, beautiful beach, he took us—telling us he would make two trips to bring us back, 4.30 and 6 p. m.

Now we were in the real open—on a lonely island, with a few widely separated camps all boarded up, miles of firm beach, miles of shifting sand backed by dunes, a bold headland at the southern tip of the island, and inland a rolling broken prairie of beach-grass, beach plums, beach goldenrod, bayberry, sweet gale and wild rose. The Waltham librarian was as much interested in plants as in birds, and when we started back he had three clumps of the beautiful little sea lavender, or marsh rosemary, to set in his wild flower garden. The Watertown boy with him had a baby crow, one of a family of four, which he would not take until he had respectfully asked the leader's permission. He wanted to bring it up as a pet, and also to hear what his mother would say when she saw it, and our last half hour on the island was spent chasing butterflies and digging for beach worms to satisfy this astonishing wide-mouthed young "corbeau." Had it been a song bird, of course no one would have dreamed of taking it.

The afternoon quickly went. Its high spots

were a ten minute siesta on the headland looking out to sea when one was looking at all, a glorious walk northward for a mile or so toward Newburyport, and a swing back inland to the other side of the island for the 4.30 boat. It was hard to tell which was more interesting, walking down where the waves almost caught one now and then, or up on the dunes leaping from summit to summit and getting the view both ways. Once or twice I heard a debate whether a tern was common or roseate, but to me the difference between a pink bill and black one half a mile away was negligible. I heard also the cry, "Scoter," and I think the decision was white-winged, but to me it was simply a bit of wild life in the air for a moment and then settling down confidently on the waves.

To some people this would have seemed like a lonely desolate shore. To these folks it was thickly settled. To some there would be nothing doing. To the scientists in this party some of the most interesting changes were taking place before their eyes. They could see Plum Island being made a reef, catching a bit of sand, a seed dropped by a bird, some one of the marsh grasses getting its rootlets down and holding the sand, and in a short time, geologically speaking, Plum Island, with hot-dog stands at one end and lovely dunes at the other.

In the long years the most useful of all these plants, my librarian friend told me, was the maram grass, a sand lover whose curving ends moved by the wind drew a perfect circle in the sand around the separate clumps.

There were many savanna and vesper sparrows, and I had a good chance to see the former, with which I was not so well acquainted, and to hear it sing. Ipswich gives its name to a larger sparrow, which winters in these marshes and among these dunes and breeds on Sable Island. For a long time it was a

mysterious little creature whose movements were unknown, but patient men have watched and followed and waited until they now have the story.

One lady of our party was determined to see an Ipswich sparrow, and the leader promised her one if she would come on the regular New Year's Day walk.

Mr. Talbot, the president, told me that among the birds which stay all winter on this shore is the myrtle warbler, which finds food and shelter in the bayberry. One New Year's Day down here they had a list of over thirty birds.

Half a dozen times during the day some one asked me if I did not know Dr. Townsend and his books. I had to say no. So the first thing I did after coming back was to look him up: Charles Wendell Townsend, M. D., of Boston, physician, teacher and ornithologist, author of "The Birds of Essex County," "Along the Labrador Coast," "Beach Grass," "Sand Dunes and Salt Marshes," and a number of other works. Sometimes the club goes to his Ipswich cottage. Most of them seem to have come under the spell of his nature writing. A chapter or two of "Sand Dunes and Salt Marshes" easily explains why. He is both a poet and a scientist. He delights in Sidney Lanier, whom he quotes freely. He tells in detail of what I have just hinted. He writes of New England and Labrador especially, but in a way to interest nature students everywhere.

As we sat on the sand waiting for the boat, a piping plover came near—a beautiful little bird which lived up to its name by piping continually as it worked about in search of food. Townsend says it has "one of the sweetest, saddest notes he knows—a clear double whistle." Another writer says "it can not be called a whistler or even a piper in an ordinary sense. Its tone has a particularly striking and musical quality. *Queep, queep, queep-o,* or *peep, peep, peep-lo,*

may imitate its peculiar melody, the tone of which is round, full, sweet, reminding one of a high key on an Italian hand organ or the *hautboy* in a church organ." It is one of the species threatened with extinction. Perhaps the new interest in conservation, the new attitude toward wild life of all kinds, has come along in time to save this little bird. The fact that sportsmen themselves are beginning to co-operate with naturalists and humanitarians to save interesting and beautiful creatures gives us hope.

CHAPTER XXVII

WINTER SUNSHINE AT THE WAYSIDE INN

LATE in January, 1927, eighteen of us went to the old Wayside Inn for a three days' visit. For some of the party the three days had to be cut down to one and one-half or two days. For others it was stretched from Sunday night to Thursday morning. All of us were the guests of Mr. Henry Ford, who in addition to his duties as inventor, manufacturer and financier, about three years ago took on the responsibilities of landlord of this ancient hostelry.

The landlords of the Wayside Inn have played a conspicuous part in its history. One family, "the Howes of Sudbury," held the inn for four generations, or a total of 174 years. Much of that time it was known as "The Red Horse Tavern." Another landlord, Edward R. Lemon, a Malden antiquarian, held it for twenty-three years. Mr. Lemon was an ardent collector and filled the old place with furniture of the Colonial period. He died in 1920.

About four years after Mr. Lemon died Mr. Ford, with wealth at his command, stepped in and relieved Mrs. Lemon of a heavy burden. He saved the inn from going into the hands of real estate speculators and possibly being spoiled by a new hotel project. Soon it became clear that the American people had been greatly fooled in Mr. Ford by a passing remark to the effect that "history is bunk," a remark not unlike some things which the great English historian Macaulay said about history. For Mr. Ford has an intense appreciation of history. With characteristic promptness and thoroughness he went to work to save the Wayside Inn. Old rotten boards and timbers

were pulled out with great care and replaced. Old foundations were rebuilt. As fast as his agents could secure them, be bought back some of the furniture belonging to the inn which had been scattered to the four winds, and other old pieces which would fit. Little by little he added to his holdings of land, until now he has 2,500 acres stretching two and a half miles along the Boston-Worcester road.

He cleaned out the brook, made a dam, and put up a stone mill in plain view of the thousands who pass and repass on the post road. The wheel outside the building, which turns night and day, weighs 7,000 pounds, and is so perfectly balanced that a man can move it with his hand. Other buildings on the farms acquired have been put in order and set to work caring for one or another of the members of the staff. The latest acquisition is the old schoolhouse of Sterling, Mass., famous as the scene of the incident immortalized by John Roulston, a young theological student, in the poem, "Mary Had a Little Lamb." The building was half destroyed when Mr. Ford found it. It had been used as a stable and as a garage. Now, restored and repainted, it stands at a crossroads on the property in a pine woods with one of the best teachers available in charge, and is used again as a public school. So far has the work of restoration gone that Mr. Ford has had reprinted an edition of McGuffey's Fourth Reader, a schoolbook of fifty or sixty years ago, spending enough money on this one feature to build two or three such schoolhouses. And in the old bookcase in the corner of the room there is one of the best collections of schoolbooks of the early part of the nineteenth century to be found anywhere. Some history may be bunk, but the man who is alleged to have said it is creating what may become, as President Sykes of St. Lawrence said, "eventually one of the finest historical museums in the country."

For many years there have been frequent visitors to the inn, but now the number has greatly increased. In 1925 there were 45,000, and in 1926 94,000. There are visitors also who sign no register and inspect no old ballroom or kitchen. They are the wild creatures, all of which Mr. Ford loves and to which he is giving protection. A bear came poking around while the workmen were putting up the schoolhouse. Deer are seen frequently. There are bird shelters and feeding trays fastened up all through the 2,500 acres. There are boxes of Indian corn on the cob for the squirrels and pheasants. The school teacher is versed in the lore of birds and trees and flowers, and modern nature study will take its place with "McGuffey's New Fourth Eclectic Reader" as a part of the curriculum. And it is likely that the mills on the Ford place will be used as schoolhouses and demonstration plants.

Our landlord departed for his second best home in Michigan the day before our arrival, but he left fires lighted in all the fireplaces, in the parlor where Longfellow, Ole Bull and the other close friends used to gather, in the taproom with its quaint old bar now turned into an office desk, in the kitchen, with its wealth of old relics, where the fireplace is the largest of all.

He left also a well-stocked larder—good beef, lamb and chickens, bins of potatoes and barrels of delicious MacIntosh apples raised on the place, sides of bacon and baskets of eggs, and a line of communication open to markets where all the other fruits and vegetables could be secured. He left a manager who can shore up a building, fix a car, greet a senator, or make a speech. He left a cook and assistant cooks who can turn out all the essentials, from soup to pie, plum pudding and ice cream. And he left ladies in the house as hostesses who with equal skill put logs on the fire, prepared a communion table, and graced an

anniversary banquet. We were sorry not to have with us this successor of David, Ezekiel, Adam and Lyman Howe, but we had his spirit moving here and there in things animate and inanimate, and that spirit was not out of place among the great memories and traditions of the Wayside Inn. There is no bunk about the history that this quiet, studious man of simple tastes and boundless energy is making in the old town of Sudbury, Massachusetts.

Nearly always we have a snowstorm when we are at the inn, and the men enjoy it. In the low-ceilinged rooms, gathered around the blazing logs, the feeling of snugness and comfort is accentuated by the howling wind, the swirling snowflakes, and the drifts forming even up to the window sills. This year, for a change, we had glorious winter sunshine from start to finish. Those of us who drove out late in the day Monday traveled straight toward a brilliant sunset. For the long tramp Tuesday morning we had a wintry scene simply bathed in golden light. Wednesday, which turned bitter cold, made no difference with the sun. He sent his beams straight down into the areas of high pressure from upper British Columbia and made them almost visible with his shining. On days of such winter sunshine there is always a corner between buildings or on the windward side of a thick wood where one can stop to rest in comfort and content. Out of the kitchen windows of the inn at our last meeting, Wednesday morning, we looked into bushes thus protected and almost swarming with beautiful little chickadees.

Those of us who walked out after dinner at night found winter starlight almost equally brilliant and just as beautiful. The North Star, so clear that night, seemed to tell us that there are some things fixed and sure. The old oaks, facing bravely the cold of still another winter, seemed to link us to unnumbered

generations who have steered to port by a light that has never failed.

For twenty-four years a group of Universalist ministers has been going to the inn. This gathering was the twenty-fifth. Therefore on Monday night we held an anniversary banquet. To this were invited Mr. Boyer, the landlord in Mr. Ford's place, Miss Littlefield, Miss Welch and Mrs. Pelton, the hostesses, and Miss Martha Hopkins, the teacher of the school. Other guests were Mrs. Stella Marek Cushing, the violinist, Miss Dorothea Clemons Evans, her accompanist, and Mr. Samuel T. Cushing, officially appointed later as "Grand Conductor of the Orchestra in Perpetuity." There were twenty-five in all to eat the twenty-fifth anniversary dinner. In a remarkable way, the traditions for which the old Wayside Inn is most famous and the traditions of the group there present were bound up together. These ministers are the successors of the poet, the theologian, the student, the musician, the Sicilian, the Spanish Jew, immortalized by Longfellow in the Tales. The same love of the place, the same understanding of its history, the same unselfish desire to conserve the old traditions, the same appreciation of nature, of literature, of people, and of the Great Power back of all, are revealed by those who have foregathered there in these opening years of the twentieth century as by those who met there so often away back in the nineteenth.

The toastmaster for the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration, a brilliant minister now in a great national center, made all this clear. One after the other he called up the people who represented the famous characters long since gone from the stage. And before each one rose, he read with real charm the exact lines of the poem which applied.

Introducing Mr. Boyer to speak for Mr. Ford,

he said: "It would have been a great pleasure to have here the owner and landlord to whose kindness and sympathy we owe this retreat. We ought to say publicly that we can never make Mr. Ford and his associates know what this kindness has meant. Twenty-four years ago, when we came here, Mr. Lemon, the host, entered into the spirit of our gathering with full understanding. For four years after his death, Mrs. Lemon and his sister surrounded us with the same kindness. When we heard that the inn had been sold to Mr. Ford I think I can say that all of us were filled with feelings of unselfish gratification, but also of profound sadness. We could not regard it as conceivable that the new owner, no matter how high-minded, could enter with any sympathy into the thought of our retreat and allow it to go on. Three years ago we came here with heavy hearts. Through Mrs. Lemon's good offices we felt we had been allowed to assemble for one last time. We knew we never could transplant it to some other place. When we found that our coming was appreciated, and our traditions respected and valued as a part of the place, instead of coming to a funeral we felt that we had had a rebirth."

Replying, Mr. Boyer said Mr. and Mrs. Ford regretted their inability to stay for this dinner, and had begged him to express the hope that the "fraters" (as they are called) would gather there not only for twenty-five years to come but twice twenty-five and more. Referring to the thousands of visitors, he said that he had taken a census on a typical day last summer and had found that twenty-seven states and five nations were represented. The men who had built the inn, he said, started in to serve the community. As citizens the landlords had served in the Indian wars and the Revolution. He knew that the landlord of to-day wanted that spirit of service perpetuated.

Of the poet the toastmaster read:

> "All these were his: but with them came
> No envy of another's fame;
> He did not find his sleep less sweet
> For music in some neighboring street,
> Nor rustling hear in every breeze
> The laurels of Miltiades."

Then up rose a great shaggy figure with gray tousled hair—unlike T. W. Parsons in looks or verse, but his exact counterpart in love of his fellow men and in his freedom from things small and mean. The most picturesque of the group, a great preacher, long years pastor in the metropolis, professor in a theological school, he loves fun and frolic like an overgrown schoolboy, and he convulsed the group with his poem, "Lady Wentworth." Unhappily, it is not released for publication.

"In the days of the emancipation of women," said the toastmaster, introducing Stella Marek Cushing, "it is right to have Ole Bull reincarnated in this pleasing form." Three times Mrs. Cushing played with exquisite skill and feeling—her first group made of selections Ole Bull might have played there, including the one in manuscript which he wrote himself and which hangs on the parlor wall. Her second group was of Bohemian music, illustrating again that where the heart is there the treasure is also, and her third "The Last Rose of Summer" and "Nearer My God to Thee." Simply and eloquently Mrs. Cushing spoke of Ole Bull, the nobility of his manhood and the power of his music. She related the incident of his playing "Saeterjentens Sondag" to the King of Norway and how the King told him he ought to go to Egypt and play it from the top of the Sphinx, and how Ole Bull at the age of sixty-six, tall, lithe, fit, made that journey, scaled those steep sides and then, facing the north, played for the King.

In the original group the theologian was Prof. Daniel Treadwell of Harvard. The toastmaster read this description of him:

"Skilful alike with tongue and pen,
He preached to all men everywhere
The Gospel of the Golden Rule,
The New Commandment given to men,
Thinking the deed, and not the creed,
Would help us in our utmost need.
With reverent feet the earth he trod,
Nor banished nature from his plan,
But studied still with deep research
To build the Universal Church,
Lofty as the love of God,
And ample as the wants of man."

"Here," said he, "is a description of one who is representative of the true apostolic succession in every communion." The frater who rose to speak for the theologian belonged to the original group. In a beautiful Maine city for over twenty years he stood for this kind of catholicity, and in consequence the whole city claimed him as their own.

Of the twenty-one Tales, said he, ten are distinctly religious, and in all the others are passages which are religious. He illustrated this thesis by effective quotations, closing with the last words in "The Saga of King Olaf:"

"The dawn is not distant
Nor is the night starless;
Love is eternal.
God is still God, and
His faith shall not fail us,
Christ is eternal."

Belonging to the company was the president of a university doing great things for education in a great state. Here he was simply a chum and a comrade. He took the part of the student, taken by Henry Ware

Wales in the original group. "Our first landlord" (Mr. Lemon), said he, "was a genius in making people feel at home. Our present landlord is a genius in making all our people from coast to coast and from the Gulf to the Lakes acquainted with each other. And how rich and independent does knowledge of every kind make a man." In the busy man of affairs, we saw one who was at heart a student.

The toastmaster had trouble explaining why the cultured, traveled dean of a theological school should be cast for the part of the Sicilian, but the Dean was equal to the emergency. He started with the lines where Longfellow represents the Sicilian sitting by the fire musing on places far and near. Then he sent his mind back over the years to the time when Henry Ford was working night after night in his little shop perfecting his engine, and gave a graphic account of what he knew about Mr. Ford over twenty years of personal contact—another of the delightful things too intimate for publication.

There was more fun over the toastmaster announcing a leading Connecticut preacher as the Spanish Jew. This preacher, recently back from a tour to Egypt, Palestine, and other sections of the Near East, spoke of interesting contacts with Jews and Moslems—how human they all are, and how drawn to them one is through acquaintance.

"During the twenty-four years," said the scribe who spoke last, "fifty-three men have belonged to the retreat. Eleven have died: Andrews, Holden, Kimmell, O. H. Perkins, E. D. Saunders, Bisbee, Dole, Hayden, Adams, G. G. Hamilton and Powers. The great majority of the fifty-three belonged in the first ten years. In recent years membership has been more stable, men have not moved too far away. The last new member taken in was in 1924."

With "Auld Lang Syne," led by the pianist and

violinist, the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration closed. But like that other company of the long ago,

> " . . . . reluctant to retire,
> The friends sat talking by the fire
> And watched the smouldering embers burn
> To ashes, and flash up again
> Into a momentary glow,
> Lingering like them when forced to go
> And going when they would remain."

There was an unexpected happening on Tuesday so dramatic, so funny, so full of "copy," that no editor of a Sunday supplement would have missed it if he could have been advised. The entire party walked up the road to the schoolhouse. On the front they saw a restoration of the old sign. It read: "The Red Stone School, 1798, School District No. 2, Sterling, Mass." The pupils were not there, as school was opening on the morrow, but the teacher was busy getting ready. Suddenly falling into the spirit of it, the men threw off the years and filed in to school, as if boys once more. One or two were too big to get into the seats and stood up against the wall.

The others took their places, the teacher entered into the spirit of it, and there was a session unlike any other that ever has been or ever will be. When you get a "down East" school marm, keen as a razor, raised in Aroostook, trained in city and country, she can match wits with the best. To see her take our leading intellectual light and walk him out into the entry as a bad boy will never fade from the memory of his huge playmates. But he was game, and came back looking as if he had stepped out of one of Nast's political cartoons.

There were songs and recitations, lessons in geography, reading and spelling, and the salute to the flag.

"Remember," said the teacher with satire the *New York Sun* never equaled, "our country is the

biggest and wisest and can whip any other country in the world. Remember we are here to study ways to earn money. We must make our country the richest on earth so it can lend money to the others."

All trooped out for recess. There probably have been funnier sights, but it did not seem so then. The dean and the professor jostled one another, and then pulled off overcoats, coats and vests in the cold January air and squared off for a mock fight. When teacher rang the old bell all trooped sedately back. Nobody needed to recite "Backward, turn backward, O Time in your flight, make me a child again just for to-night." It actually happened. Wagging gray beards and heads the color of the snow and stomachs which shook like the belly of Santa Claus capered about the liveliest of all. And it all happened around the building where the immortal lamb walked in behind its little mistress and lay undiscovered under her seat until she was called out to recite. There was a picture of that Mary Tyler, or Mary Sawyer, as an old woman, hanging on the wall of the schoolroom.

After dinner that same night was held the spelling match—a bore to beginners but as unalterable for the old timers as the law of the Medes. It is not spelling down, but spelling *up* into chair number one. And as the spelling is done letter by letter around the circle, and nobody knows the word started and nobody dares end a word because it means going to the foot, there is chance for lively maneuvering. Dislodge him though the others did once, the toastmaster of Monday clung to the head chair and became the victor of Tuesday. The prior for the year, who had to make a quick trip to a neighboring city this night for an annual parish meeting, is usually the star performer at this event, and by fast driving he got back in time for one warm argument with the dictionary.

But we must not leave the impression that all

was in lighter vein. The twilight hours, four to six, dedicated through the years to serious consideration of religious themes and to individual testimony, were sacredly kept. A morning session was held also on Wednesday. One subject was "The Fraters Who Have Gone On," another was "Enriching Our Sense of God," and a third, led by the General Superintendent of the Church, was "How to Get World Peace." Perhaps the communion service which followed the discussion and with which he officially closed the retreat was the best answer of all to this question.

Down On the Potomac

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE SEARCH FOR THE GALLINULES

ON a trip to Washington in May, 1927, I found the little world of nature lovers with which we are in contact greatly excited over the Florida gallinule. It had been seen on the Virginia side of the Potomac, in a swamp.

I manifested interest and pleasure, but indulged in no leading remarks about "gallinules." That it was some kind of bird instead of a snake or alligator or real estate boomer, I was morally certain from my knowledge of the people whom I heard talking. But I kept still until I could steal off quietly and take down some of the authorities and look it up.

There it was—colored plate and all—the first time I ever had noticed it. The Florida gallinule is a black water bird, twelve to fourteen inches long, weighing almost a pound, black or bluish slate, the under surface of the body whitish, with a red ring on legs, and a brilliant red "frontal plate" or comb.

Forbush also has this interesting paragraph about these birds:

> "The Florida gallinule is the water hen of America. Its generic name (*Gallinula*) means little hen, and it walks, talks and squawks like a veritable biddy of the barnyard. It behaves, however, like a connecting link between the hens and the ducks, as it swims and dives like a duck. Like the purple gallinule, its large, long-toed feet serve, like snow shoes, to support it as it walks or runs over the surface of the water from one lily pad to another, or over the tangled leaves and stems of other floating water plants. . . . By keeping under cover it eludes observation. Where uncommon, as in New England, it might escape notice were it not

> for its loud calls in the breeding season, which are so much like the common clucks and cackles of the barn yard, that, when coming from the henless, watery waste of the marsh land, they attract the attention of the ornithologist."

Without my knowledge or consent, I discovered that I had been enrolled in a party of six to hunt for the gallinule. A Chevy Chase lady drove a large closed car. A Captain of the U. S. N., retired, and the Captain's lady, who knows more about birds and trees and trails than any of the rest of us, a cousin of a Universalist minister from Vermont, and the Madame and I made up the party.

In all my twenty-seven years' connection with Washington, I never had a day of more vivid contrasts. We started among the show places of the Capital—the White House, the Lincoln Memorial, the Monument and Potomac Park. We landed on a dump, and in a swamp and among interminable railroad tracks. We got our second wind, and made our way up out of the dump and away from the tracks to lovely Arlington, clad in the new tender green of early spring. But down in the dump and up at Arlington and in the shadow of the Lincoln Memorial alike we saw birds.

We began with warblers in Potomac Park, but soon our attention was attracted by two specks out on the basin. Following the shore around, we saw them dive and reappear. Bringing them near with the glasses, they were easily identified as loons—perhaps the very pair that will call all day to us later in the season on some northern lake, if we are lucky enough to get a camping trip this year.

As we motored on over the Potomac, we saw how misty it was, and feared that our "water hens" would be hard to find. Just a few hundred yards beyond the bridge on the left hand side of the military road to

Arlington, bounded by a dump on one side and a railroad bank on the other, there is a little swamp so rich in bird life that nature lovers have been doing their best for several years to have it taken by the Government and turned into a bird sanctuary. Every year this feeding place of water birds grows smaller and smaller. Standing there on the hard road while limousines and trucks whizzed by in unending procession, we saw the greater yellow legs, the lesser yellow legs, the least sandpiper, the solitary sandpiper, the least bittern, the kildeer—some of them never seen in Washington except in migration, going far north to breed and far south for the winter. Having these birds all close together, one got a good idea of the relative size of the different species. Running along the sea shore, dodging the surf, probing some soft mudbank for food, or teetering on a hummock in a swamp, birds of this family are most interesting to watch. The plaintive little note we heard now and then seemed justified when we remembered how many thousands every year are lured out of the sky by decoys and shot. My soldier brother, who has lost all taste for killing things since he has been in the army, tells me that, when flushed, the movements of most of the snipes and sandpipers are so erratic that they are hard to hit. The greater yellow legs is a comparatively easy mark. From Newburyport on a single day recorded twenty-three years ago, 463 greater yellow legs were shipped to the Boston market.

The cardinal came in all his glorious red plumage and sang, and the little long-billed marsh wren showed himself, but we hurried on in quest of the gallinule. Following the road toward Alexandria for half a mile through the mess of fertilizer plants and dumps and negro cabins which face the Nation's Capital on this bank of the Potomac, we left the car and walked toward the river. Talk about choice refuse, one can

find it here—tin, iron, glass, paper, in all shapes and sizes and in all stages of decay. Mounting a high railroad embankment, we found ourselves blocked by a long freight train, and watched Southern, Seaboard and Atlantic Coast Line trains whiz by until the freight moved on. Crossing the tracks we found ourselves at another destination—one of the wide, long bays of the Potomac River, shut in by sand bars and little islands where it met the main channel of the river. Far away in the mist were many birds, the graceful little Bonaparte gulls, said our authorities, who had been here a few days before. There were ducks also, too indistinct in the mist to identify.

There was no trouble making out some other large birds, wading far away on the sandbanks or rising in heavy flight. They were the great blue heron, one of the water birds which stays within sight of the dome of the Capitol the greater part of the year.

Cleverly arranged to make the gallinule the climax of our morning's work, we now retraced our steps to another part of the same swampy shore. "Tourists over yonder in Potomac Park or around those majestic buildings in plain sight," we remarked, "could hardly believe that they could look down on a spot so wild." Between us and the water there was such a thicket of trees and vines that we could have seen little near the shore if we had not been raised above it all by the fill of the railroad. Pausing a moment to see an indigo bunting, those of us who had not seen the gallinules lost our chance, for those ahead, who had seen them before, saw them again for just an instant. Then came one of those long, weary waits, with hope deferred that maketh the heart sick. They did not reappear. Then said I to myself: "Why this failure and despair? These things are only a breed of hens. Ten thousand times as a boy have I sought lost hens in the neighbors' peas and driven them home.

Let us be up and doing." So amid loud shouts of "Poison ivy," I plunged in the tangle, and, jumping from hummock to hummock, I reached a little cove just in time to see an odd looking, remote cousin of a black leghorn walking over the water plants as the books described it, stretching out its neck furtively, peering and making for cover. Marking the spot with my eye, I called the others to my watery watch tower, and made another circuit up beyond the gallinule and drove him back. He performed one hundred per cent perfect, coming where all could see him, study his markings and put him forever in that holy of holies where nature lovers keep choice memories. This done, we sat down on the railroad ties and cinders and had the sandwiches our friends had brought.

In Washington May tenth is about the height of the migration, and this was the ninth. We therefore were not surprised at the endless succession of interesting things which came to us. The white-eyed vireo gave those emphatic bursts of melody which make one sure who he is. The catbirds came stealing up, mewing at us. The turkey vulture and osprey soared above. The song sparrow sang near by. Just here, also in sight of the dome and the Monument, one often sees the bald-headed eagle—usually associated in our minds with remote inaccessible mountain crags.

The gallinules gave some of the loud cacklings now and then which Forbush describes, and one came flapping and running over the water toward the cackling one in the bushes just before we left.

An exceptionally beautiful incident just as we were starting on was the poising of an orchard oriole on the tip top of a little maple near us, with the sun full on his chestnut or rufous color. Brought up on the Baltimore oriole which always nested in the garden "at the old home," I never appreciated until

recent years the equally beautiful orchard oriole. We may have had it in the garden all those years and never have seen it. Unless trained in the right way, children see little but the startling colors in nature.

Nor did we confine our attention to the birds. Repeatedly we were asking the navy man, "What is this flower?" "What is that bush?" At one place he took us to see one of the deadliest of our native shrubs, the poison sumach—much like the other sumach except that the leaves are not dentated and its fruit is white instead of red. "All of it is poisonous," said he, "leaves, bark, roots, everything. It is a good thing to leave this specimen here, for I bring many people to study it."

Easily poisoned by poison ivy or oak, and going every year through quantities of it, I have found comparative immunity in frequent washings of the skin exposed as soon after exposure as possible, and in quick treatment of the first blister that appears so that it may not grow into a hundred. In this as in everything else, safety lies in understanding, and nature lovers who fear some tramps on account of possible poisoning should send to the United States Department of Agriculture for their bulletin on this subject, read up, and then plunge ahead wherever they want to go.

We were not far from Arlington, and went there directly after lunch, entering the lower part of the grounds where visitors seldom penetrate, where there are wild woods and roads and sloping lawns so bordered and studded with gigantic trees that they too seem almost like a forest. Out of a disused vault almost completely hidden flew a phoebe which had nested there. Up in one of the oaks, the Captain saw a blue-winged warbler which some of us never had seen. Seven other kinds of warblers showed themselves, too. In all there were sixty-four birds the party

saw without making any special effort to get a "list."

In one of these old trees for years, the Audubon people have been able to find the barred owl. This year his home is empty. Probably something happened like this incident which did come to our attention:

Two or three weeks ago a number of members of the Audubon Society of Washington were looking for birds on the edge of the Arlington grounds in Virginia. They discovered a barred owl near one of the little spaces outside the grounds, and while they were studying it with their glasses they heard a shot and saw the bird fall to the ground. Hurrying up to the place they met a man with a gun, and asked him why he had shot the bird. The man was belligerent from the beginning, and said he would shoot any bird that molested his chickens. One of the party, a very distinguished gentleman, a former Member of Congress and now on the Federal Reserve Board, quietly tried to explain to the man that this bird did not eat chickens, and that any way such birds ought not to be exterminated, but the man grew more and more angry. So they departed and left him alone.

One of the boys most interested, and remarkably expert in ornithology, lingered behind, and when the man cooled off succeeded in buying the dead bird. He took it at once to the National Museum and enlisted the co-operation of the expert in charge of one of the departments, and they prepared the bird for mounting. At the same time they made a careful examination of the contents of its stomach. They found parts of mice, including several bony skulls of mice, in his crop, but not the slightest trace of chicken. If the owl had darted down into the chicken yard it probably was as an ally of the man who had destroyed its life, helping him free his place of vermin.

As we sat under the great trees at Arlington and recalled this incident one of the party said that Professor X of the Biological Survey not long ago related this interesting incident: He was watching a broad-winged hawk soaring above him, when a man came out of a near-by house with a gun. He asked the man what he intended to do, and the man said he was going to kill the hawk. The scientist said to him that the hawk was not destructive, but was worth a good many dollars to him in the course of a year. While they were talking about it, the hawk came down like a flash into the chicken yard and mounted again rapidly with something in his talons. "There," said the man, "what did I tell you?" and taking aim he fired. The hawk came tumbling down to them with a mink in his claws. Unseen by the farmer, the mink had been ravaging the poultry yard, and the hawk went after the mink.

There is no use in nature lovers trying to argue that hawks and owls and other birds never do any damage. But year after year by careful examination of the stomachs of birds that are taken, they are building up a strong case to back their contention that the good done even by birds which are considered most destructive far outbalances the harm. Many a time man has found that in attempting to exterminate one species he has upset the balance of nature and opened the door to a whole raft of evils of which he had never dreamed.

By mid afternoon we headed for home. The mists of the morning had disappeared and the sun was hot.

It seemed good to get into a cool, dark apartment and rest. But as the afternoon wore on we realized anew that we did not need to go far afield to study the songsters. A pair of cardinals came to the bedroom window for sunflower seeds. A jay darted down and

ONE OF THE CAMPS ON SUMMIT LAKE
"Up above the farm"

seized one as if stealing it. A big old purple grackle came and stood at ease, cracking the seeds leisurely as if he owned the whole place. A Maryland yellow throat gave his witchety, witchety, witchety, near by. A flicker announced most emphatically that he was there, and our wood thrushes and robins sang a vesper song together before I started off for the Federal Express. From the bedroom of our Fourth Floor Back the Madame has heard sixteen varieties of birds singing in the morning before she arose.

It is restful to get away from the grind of the office for a week end in Washington. To hear Perkins preach with the eloquence and feeling that he did on Mothers' Day, to see old friends, to wander out in the woods and swamps, to hear the songs of countless migrating birds, and to make the acquaintance of the Florida gallinule, is to get a new grip on life—a new faith in religion.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE GREAT FALLS OF THE POTOMAC

AFTER a summer unusually cold and rainy there came, along the last of September and the first of October, a series of warm sunny days—"the best days of the year."

On three of them I was in Washington. On the first I saw Arlington clad in as majestic and beautiful a garment of light as I ever had seen draped over it—the day on which to the sound of wild, sweet music and the steps of marching men we laid away a distinguished veteran of the Civil War. On the second I saw the streets and little parks of the city filled with the same October sunshine, as I went about many errands. On the third I saw it in great beauty over the Great Falls of the Potomac.

Whether it was a sense of impending loss coming from the agitation for a power plant on the Potomac, or release from toil, or contrast with pain and death, I do not know, but on this day Great Falls was more beautiful than I had ever seen it.

To begin with, the outing was extempore. It was arranged the night before by several different people, all friends, and nobody knew for sure who was to be there. The unexpected gave an edge to our delight.

Two of us were old-fashioned folk who preferred to go by trolley, and two of us were a family in which the man—a specialist in optics—was getting over serious illness and felt he had better go by trolley, and one of us was the wife of a superintendent of schools who had the car for the day, so we all met at Rosslyn, across the river from Georgetown, where the

Great Falls trolley starts. This day, however, it did not start—at least when we wanted it to—and so I waved a magic wand and summoned a "Packard six" and a good angel to come and get us. My wand was a nickel in a slot and a short talk by telephone. My "Packard six" was the car of one of the trustees of the Universalist church. My good angel was that same trustee, who stands in relation to the Washington parish much as old Uncle Fliakim did to the Congregational parish in "Oldtown Folks."

Uncle Eliakim, or Fliakim, as the boys called him, was "a nervous, wiry, thin, dry, little old man, every part of whose body appeared to be hung together by springs that were in constant vibration."

Our Washington "Uncle Eliakim," on the contrary, is a square-shouldered six-footer, still in middle life. In a thousand and one other ways he differs from Fliakim. But wherein Harriet Beecher Stowe's description of Uncle Fliakim fits him is in these sentences: "The kindest souled, most untiringly benevolent, single-hearted body that could be imagined." " 'If you want to find Liakim,' says my grandfather with his usual smile, 'never go after him—you'll never catch him; but stand long enough on any one spot on earth and he's sure to go by.' " If it had not been for Uncle Fliakim, with his one-eyed horse of whalebone and india rubber, Aunt Bathsheba Sawin, Aunt Jerusha Pettibone, Mother Chris and Phoebe Drury of Oldtown never would have been able to get to church or back home again. If it had not been for our Washington understudy for old Eliakim, and his succession of automobiles, big and little, our Bathshebas and Jerushas and Phoebes would have been left out, many a time. So this day, in difficulty, I summoned Fliakim, and in half an hour he was there, ready to pick up all five of us. Flying along behind him was the second section of our party

in a big Buick coach, driven by a lady who could qualify as a Lady Bountiful, so constantly does she put herself and her car at the service of other people. With her were the pastor of the National Universalist Memorial Church and his wife. Piled high in her car were our skillets and coffee pots and baskets of supplies. A moment to redistribute our load, and we were off—up through Cherrydale and Langley, past the Washington Country Club, down to the Potomac again at Chain Bridge, and then over an old pike lately rebuilt toward Leesburg.

Our naturalist driver swerved quickly to save the little land tortoise crossing the road. He stopped to show us some unusual willow or magnificent oak. He pointed out the architectural beauties of an old farmhouse rebuilt as a country home. He called out the name of every stream and told us where it entered the Potomac. And he landed us at Great Falls, Virginia, in high good spirits for what was ahead of us. Here we picked up the last recruit for the picnic, an anomalous character who, though descended from Virginians, was born in the District of Columbia—the only native daughter we had with us—keen, bright, friendly, quick on the trigger, charming always.

When I went to Washington in 1900 only the hardiest adventurer ever went to Great Falls, Virginia. We went up to Great Falls, Maryland, by trolley to Cabin John Bridge, and then walked or drove all the way from Washington over the Conduit Road owned by the United States Government. Great Falls, Virginia, was opened first by a trolley company. The good motor roads have come in the last few years.

The trolley company has constructed a dancing pavilion, and a few other buildings, piped water to various hydrants, built paths and put up signs. They have been careful to preserve the remains of the canal

and the mill constructed by George Washington, and these are a source of great interest to visitors. Seldom do we find a crowd at Great Falls and even if we do there is so much room that nobody is crowded. This day we were practically the only people there.

The park is on the top of the Palisades below the falls. Paths lead out to projecting points from which one can look up and down the gorge for some distance. Up stream are the falls themselves, this day a tawny flood of water although the river was not high, the foam and spume well lighted up by the October sun but lacking the dazzling white of clearer water when it boils over rocks. Across the river the high Maryland shore, well wooded here, with pygmy people sitting out on the rocks. Other channels of the river which started up above, here pour their waters back into the main stream.

I was about to indulge in reflections on the grandeur of the scenery and the thoughts which came to us as we draped ourselves here and there over the big boulders after dinner and looked at the rushing flood. But unfortunately I recalled a recent article by Charles Walton Morton on "Hunting with a Typewriter." In it he gives directions to nature lovers for writing up their experiences. Says he: "If you are one of those sensitive fellows who react to the Grandeur of Nature proceed somewhat as follows: 'And there thrusting up into the air its towering height and almost seeming to touch the sky rose Mount Geehawkus. It was superb.' " The editor of the *Independent*, who published the article, commented: "Next season we plan to spend our vacation in a disused cyclone cellar, where we expect to be practically immune from thrilling experiences."

That something grand, awe-inspiring, powerful, hovers over the spot needs no attestation other than our sworn statement attached that, just as in heaven

"there was silence for the space of half an hour," so here, even with the pastor of the National Church leading, the same silence prevailed.

"Eliakim" and I did the cooking. Bacon and coffee were the "*pieces de resistance.*" Nothing is better out of doors than crisp tender bacon just out of the skillet clapped between slices of buttered bread and eaten as a sandwich. Believe it or not (a second affidavit of eye witnesses is attached in proof), Eliakim tossed a whole skilletful of bacon into the air so that every piece turned over and descended to its proper place without the loss of a drop of grease. Two friendly hound dogs attached themselves to us, manifesting boundless good-will and gratitude for scraps, and making no trouble except to excite Eliakim when they climbed a big boulder when we were not looking, to eat out of his skillets.

We had earnest discussions which skirted the edges of philosophy, theology, history and romance. The engineer who worked so hard on intricate optical problems during the war that he almost ruined his health, locked horns with our star theologian over the question of the existence of justice in the universe. "In the character of a Perfect God," I heard him say, "what is the need of justice? Why insert in your creed that clause about 'just retribution?' Does not perfect love do away with any need for justice?" At that moment my coffee began to boil over and I lost the run of the debate.

"How can I answer that fellow?" I thought. "Doubt if I can answer him. Well, at any rate, if I am a superficial philosopher I at least know that it is a great day and I am glad to be here, and these folks all know I can make coffee."

It was a day of complete change, of rest, of delight in scenery as wild as can be found anywhere in the eastern part of the United States, and of equal

delight in the company of old friends, and of new friends who have the flavor of old ones.

In August, 1927, Dr. Le Grand Powers of Washington wrote me that, either from memory or from some new visit, I ought to write a Cruising article about this wild gorge of the Potomac above Washington, and the danger of its complete destruction by proposed hydro-electric power plants. Although the Cruising articles are "Casual and Carefree," typical of moments when we do not think of "causes" and "reforms," but simply rejoice in this good world, the suggestion of Dr. Powers fits in with my mood. There will be little left that is "casual" and "carefree" in this country of ours if we do not call a halt on our American tendency to turn everything into horsepower and the wealth which comes from it.

Not only is the scenery at Great Falls wild and beautiful, the scenery along the river between Washington and Great Falls is of extraordinary beauty. Visitors to Washington who never have heard anything about it often have their eyes opened while crossing the Key Bridge in Georgetown. Looking up the river they see the Three Sisters, rocky islets sticking up above the water, and beyond them the curving wooded banks of the Virginia shore of the Potomac. Upon inquiry they are told that the scenery grows more beautiful all the way to Great Falls, twelve or fifteen miles up the river. The Potomac flows through a narrow rocky gorge. The banks are high and wooded, and there are wooded islands. In places there are beautiful palisades. At Great Falls the whole majestic force of the Potomac is sent leaping and foaming over jagged rocks in two or three narrow channels. The falls themselves are set in a great gorge of jagged cliffs and boulders, pictured rocks and pot-holes, which looks like an ancient battlefield of Titans. Many times visitors who have been taken

to Great Falls for the first time exclaim: "Why have we never heard of this before?"

There is a dam above Great Falls built for the intake of the water supply of Washington. This backs the river up into a calm peaceful lake which stretches for some miles—a mighty contrast to the wild scene below. Between Great Falls and Washington there are Stubblefield Falls and the Little Falls, besides many other riffs and rapids. Several streams come in on the Virginia side which flow down steep, narrow gorges well worth exploring.

Here are deep, quiet pools out of reach of the treacherous current of the Potomac, sandy landings on the mainland and islands where one can pitch his tent and build his camp-fire. On both banks of the river and on the islands are camps and unused camp sites. The Biologists' Field Club, made up largely of scientists connected with the Government, owns Plummer's Island, three or four miles below Great Falls. On this island, thanks to the protection received there, bloom specimens of all the plants and wild flowers known to the region, and in the reeds and thickets nearly all the birds may be found. And as Washington is a meeting place for the plants of the coastal plain and plants of the piedmont region, Plummer's Island is a paradise for botanists. No responsible inquiring person has ever been barred from Plummer's Island by the owners, so far as I have heard. Those who occupy it hold it as trustees.

Though the Madame and I often talked of securing a camp on the Potomac during our Washington life, we always put it off, possibly because we had more camps at our disposal than we could use. We had the run of Minneshoe Island, below Plummer's Island, where the beautiful wood ducks breed and various kinds of other native wild creatures can be found. We have used, as if it were our own, a camp

on the Virginia side near a high outlook called Eagle Rocks, for dear, good friends long ago gave us a key and bade us welcome. In our Washington parish we have the best canoeist on the Potomac, and he has poled us up and guided us down "Stubblefield" without shipping a drop of water. For years we have gone to Great Falls on Sunday school picnics—both big and little—and for years with the hardier boys of the Sunday school have tramped the shores of the river where there are shores and gone around where there are not. Like thousands of others we have come to know and love this wild and beautiful part of the Potomac.

It has not seemed possible that Congress could permit this natural park to be destroyed. When James Bryce, the Ambassador of Great Britain to the United States, saw the upper Potomac for the first time he said: "It is a magnificent piece of scenery which you will, of course, always preserve." That might be a safe assumption in Great Britain, where land of almost priceless value in the heart of London is left for grass and trees and rose bushes. It is not a safe assumption in a country where we are enamored of mass production.

Two projects are pending for taking over the gorge of the Potomac for water power—one the project of a private corporation which sees that it can generate power enough to supply four states, and the other the project of a group of progressive senators who want a chance to demonstrate the wisdom and utility of government ownership and control. The present writer is not in principle hostile to either group. Between regulated private development and efficient public ownership there is little to choose. And the future of our civilization depends on finding new sources of power. The "white coal" of Switzerland is slowly becoming the white coal of

the United States. But there are two reasons why Great Falls ought not to be turned into "white coal." Because the inevitable tendency would be to turn Washington, or at least the Virginia side of the Potomac opposite Washington, into another Pittsburgh or Fall River, and also because we need the beauty of the gorge more than we need the power.

The plan now on file in Washington involves building a series of dams up the Potomac from Chain Bridge, which would make a lake forty miles long. The wooded islands of the Potomac would be submerged, the old tow path along the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, and the canal itself, would disappear, the hundreds of camps and thousands of camp sites would be taken, the falls themselves would be eliminated, and the wild, unique character of the gorge would be gone.

Catherine Hackett, in an illuminating article in the *Independent* for August 20, 1927, describes in some detail what is involved in the plans of the power companies, and quotes the president of the American Institute of Architects as saying that if the dam is built as proposed the majestic fall of water at Great Falls would become "simply a mass of rock foundation supporting a concrete dam."

I have not been excited over the plans of the power companies because I have not realized that there was any danger of losing Great Falls. On this recent visit to Washington, however, I was told that Catherine Hackett is right in her predictions, and that probably during the coming session of Congress a great battle will be fought, not only between the advocates of public ownership and private development, but between both of these great powers and the group which believes that we should as far as possible preserve the wonderful natural beauty with which a good God has endowed our country.

CHAPTER XXX

A WILD GORGE OF THE POTOMAC

SAID one of the most discriminating of nature students to me recently: "We all of us are inclined to overdo the thing we are especially interested in, run it into the ground, and fail to see a lot of things which are just as significant." Coming from a man who has made a reputation as a specialist this seemed worth considering.

He went on to say that all one season he had carried a camera whenever he went tramping, and was constantly on the lookout for pictures. He became so interested in looking for beautiful views that he failed to enjoy his climbing or paddling experience as a whole. In other words, there is more to contact with nature than finding an artistic picture and "snapping it." So this self-controlled man definitely gave up the camera for the next season. For the first week in the open, he said, it was a tough experience—possibly akin to giving up drink or a drug. He was continually seeing fascinating pictures he wanted to shoot, and all the time he was saying to himself, "Oh, if I only had my camera here." But after that first week, he was free from the domination of the camera habit.

On one of the bird walks of the Audubon Society, this same man called my attention to "the tyranny of the bird list." "We all are interested in seeing birds," he said, "and getting a larger list this year than last year, and in adding to our life list. It is a splendid thing and stimulates us to observe and compare and record, but I feel as if I were becoming a slave to the list. I want to pick a spot for an outing without any regard to the birds, and I want to cook a

meal in the open and lie on the ground and not care what is in the next bush."

Because this fitted in exactly with my own mood, we put it through, and here beginneth the story.

In Washington, D. C., we have an old friend who is an architect by vocation and a forester by avocation. Because of his modesty we will disguise him as "Will." He arranged the outing for B. and M. and the Madame and me.

Will "owns" in the true sense of "own" the wild gorge of the Potomac River from Washington to Great Falls. The title deeds are in the States of Virginia and Maryland and the National Government, and in various campers, farmers and landed proprietors. But the majority of these "owners" have control of a few rods or acres. Will has it all. Many of them love the river and its wild picturesque shores, but Will surpasses them all in knowledge and devotion.

The river is a kind of foster mother to him. He knows its moods and ways at every stage of water. The rocky cliffs are home to him. He can bring his canoe out of madly swirling waters to a three-foot strip of sand in the dark, and find a way up a crack in the cliffs to a soft bed of dry leaves under an overhanging rock. He knows where the rarest wild flowers bloom, and calls them all by name. He owns ferneries and nurseries and wild flower gardens which the legal owners never see. He sleeps, like the wild creatures, out in the open, safe and snug whatever the conditions. In all those wilder parts of the river he has homes, and in every home there are different sleeping places for the different winds.

Don't think that he suffers from poor meals and exposure. He would be humiliated to learn that any one thought he could not keep warm in the woods, and as for food—he resembles the Chinaman who is

said to be able to produce a seven-course dinner out of a ham-bone, a carrot and a bunch of parsley.

There is this difference between him and some of the scouts and guides and trappers of the books: He can be as correct in evening clothes and as interested in the opera and as faithful to the church as any of us.

So this is the man who packed the four of us into his car on the twenty-second of May, 1928, and laid a course westward and northward and finally to the nor-nor-west, up the right side or left bank of the Potomac River, along the government road which is built over the conduit for the water supply of Washington.

I shall not identify the spot to which he took us more definitely than to say that it was in Maryland along the Potomac, on the heights overlooking a part of the wild rocky gorge of the river a little below Great Falls.

Leaving the car at the Anglers' Club, we shouldered our packs, descended to the bank of the old Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, crossed on a foot-bridge and went up the tow-path. This is a beautiful walk, well worth taking for itself. The trees, vines and bushes have grown up in wild profusion on both sides, but the tow-path is high enough so that one can look down the little side gorges here and there and see the Potomac. In one place where the canal had broken through into the river there was a great view back toward Washington and along the high, wild, wooded Virginia shore. Over one "overflow" from the canal to the river there was left a rotten bridge, from which the boys had taken up planks for diving boards, so that the Madame acted like a horse pulling back on the halter, and for a time it even appeared as if M. were backing her up in it. But brought up as we men were with skittish and balky horses, and knowing how to pull out the tongue and sprinkle road dust

on it to make them forget their balkiness, we got both ladies over—following the old rules in principle but not in exact detail.

Leaving the tow-path we plunged into the deep woods, first on a bit of a trail and then off all trails. We went to see the two largest red birches in the vicinity of Washington. This is the river birch—the only birch the South has. In the North it is a comparatively small tree. In the South it attains to considerable size. Both North and South it is found most frequently on the banks of rivers. B. called our attention to the fact that unfortunately the scientific name is *Betula nigra*, a name which ought to have been reserved for the black birch (*Betula lenta*). With the dark foliage, the ragged reddish bark, the unusual height and girth for birches, they were a striking sight.

As we went along we passed beautiful clumps or beds of lavender cranesbill, giant chickweed, wild baby's breath, yellow star grass, and skull-cap. The wild blackberry was at its height, and along the canal there were quantities of it.

The woods were beautiful with white dogwood, and occasional locust, and there was more fringe bush than I had ever seen at one time. The air was fragrant with it. The wild grape was coming into flower. We did not see it, but the breeze brought the odor to us and we stopped to sniff. The noses of some of the party were as helpful to us as their sharp eyes and trained habits of observation.

One of the curious things we came upon in the woods was the "euonymus," or spindle tree, whose odd flower is apparently fastened to the surface of the leaf. The bark is a medicine.

When we reached the river we found that the floor of the forest was about even with the top of the gorge, with jagged rocks projecting up high enough

to keep us from walking off into eternity, and at our exact destination rising forty or fifty feet to form a magnificent lookout.

On the forest side of this lookout the ground was covered deep with dry oak leaves sloping down almost to the stones which Will had laid up for a camp-fire. To set down the water bucket carefully, to drop the heavy pack, to stretch out on his oak leaf couch and relax for a few minutes, was perfect luxury. Then we had all the fun of bringing up the wood. How could it help being fun when every turn brought a fresh surprise—a bit of laurel blooming on the face of an old gray cliff, a chestnut oak bending over and begging to be identified, a little moosewood hickory almost up to the camp-fire!

We had our little joke on M., who wanted to light the fire. Over the telephone the night before, we had decided what to take with us, and Will had added, "I will put a little bromo-seltzer bottle of kerosene in my pack to show those girls how we men can make fire with damp wood." When all was ready and M. was advancing with a match, Will looked up intently into a tall tree, and I cried, "What is it?" As M. turned to look for a bird, quick as a flash Will emptied the oil on the wood. M. lighted the fire and as it roared up cried, "See what I can do with one match." Finally we let her smell of the bromo-seltzer bottle, even if it did somewhat tarnish our reputation as woodsmen.

We put four skillets, or frying pans, to work—two with lamb chops and two with Will's unapproachable corn bread—related to delicious griddle cakes, a distant cousin of hoe-cake, but unlike any other corn bread ever made. The old Washington, D. C., Universalist church used to get him occasionally to make it at church socials, but the demand became prohibitive. Sweetened with the smoke of a camp-fire,

flavored with a dozen essences of the wilderness, eaten in the woods while resting on oak leaves, nothing that *I* know of can approach it. The crowning moment of the cooking is when Will flips the cake of corn bread in the air so that it turns over and lands in good order in the skillet. The coffee, too, bubbling up and turning over in an old tin can and set on a rock to settle, made devoted M. relax the careful regimen the doctor had ordained for B., and it seemed from reports the next day that woodsmen's coffee and corn bread and chops had completed his cure. For my part the contrast between this lunch and my usual cracker and buttermilk in Boston made me wonder, like the little old woman in Mother Goose, "if this be I."

A dog strolled up from nowhere—a clean, friendly dog, who went about the circle and wagged his tail respectfully at each of us. I gave him the last big tender chop—beautifully cooked "if I do say it as shouldn't"—and he ate it quickly just in time to dart off at the sound of a distant call.

Then to the top of the rocks for the view and rest and friendly talk.

The Madame would not go up the steep side, remarking tartly that she never had been an Alpine climber and did not propose to start. So we took the easier way up—and not so very easy at that. At the top we had sun and sky and rocks and trees, the silent swirling river down below, a distant waterfall and the higher hills of this part of the Potomac. There was not a human habitation in sight. We could look up the river for a quarter of a mile and down the river for half a mile on a straight away—then the curves of the stream and the hills blocked the view. But down the river we looked squarely against the side of Black Pond Mountain, with Difficult Run coming in out of its picturesque glen and Difficult Run Falls clearly visible above. The high

cliffs opposite us were well wooded also, and were probably not over a hundred and twenty-five feet from us at the narrowest point.

The buzzards were circling about overhead, an osprey came once in sight, the rough-winged swallows were darting over the river, and a peewee came back and forth to her little brood somewhere down there in the rocks. Occasionally B. would put his powerful glass on a bird, but he had succeeded in achieving full freedom from the tyranny of the list. Once when M. had disappeared we heard a distant squawking and he roused up and said "Green heron," and when M. came back she told of making her way down to the sandy beach and walking straight up to the green heron, "who made an awful row about it."

My readers must not think that I am developing the bad habit of reading poetry to unoffending groups to which I become attached, but, knowing the depth of Will's feeling for the river, I had put in my pocket a copy of "The Chant of the Colorado," by Cale Young Rice, written at the Grand Canyon. I read aloud the first two verses:

My brother, man, shapes him a plan
  And builds him a house in a day,
But I have toiled through a million years
  For a home to last alway.
I have flooded the sands and washed them down,
  I have cut through gneiss and granite.
No toiler of earth has wrought as I,
  Since God's first breath began it.
High mountain-buttes I have chiseled, to shade
  My wanderings to the sea.
With the wind's aid, and the cloud's aid,
Unweary and mighty and unafraid,
  I have bodied eternity.

My brother, man, builds for a span:
  His life is a moment's breath.

But I have hewn for a million years,
Nor a moment dreamed of death.
By moons and stars I have measured my task—
And some from the skies have perished:
But ever I cut and flashed and foamed,
As ever my aim I cherished:
My aim to quarry the heart of earth,
Till, in the rock's red rise,
Its age and birth, through an awful girth
Of strata, should show the wonder-worth
Of patience to all eyes.

Then I said: "This all fits the Potomac. I am not so sure about the last verse, for it reflects the color of the Grand Canyon."

My brother, man, builds as he can,
And beauty he adds for his joy,
But all the hues of sublimity
My pinnacled walls employ.
Slow shadows iris them all day long,
And silvery veils, soul-stilling,
The moon drops down their precipices,
Soft with a spectral thrilling.
For all immutable dreams that sway
With beauty the earth and air,
Are ever at play, by night and day,
My house of eternity to array
In visions ever fair.

"That is not so far out of the way as you might think," said Will. "I've seen this gorge under all kinds of weather conditions and at every hour of the day and night. I've had marvelous color effects. Take a night when the full moon comes up, or when the old moon gets low down, up above here late at night you would hardly believe what I see."

Below the rocks where we sat the river made no sound, but it moved with deep resistless current, its surface marked with whirlpools and eddy. We could hear the song of the Difficult Run Falls below,

but we were at least a mile below Great Falls and the wind was not right for the roar.

We went down to the steep sloping sandbank by the river's edge and felt the force of the water rushing by. One moment there was not a sign of life. The next a female scaup duck was whirled down the current close by. Seeing us she began swimming with all her might, making no headway until she reached an eddy along the opposite shore, when she quickly swam out of sight. "The little baby wood ducks," said Will, "which I have seen sometimes just below, are one of the prettiest sights on the river."

It seemed on this trip as if we got closer to elemental things. The gneiss rock here and there told the story of terrific convulsions of the earth, millions of years ago. The river was working away at a task set for it long before man started his long career. The woods were undisturbed. The flowers were unpicked. The difficulty of approach by land or water made it almost sure that here one could be alone.

It was night before we felt like leaving, and with little persuasion some of us would have stayed all night. The solitude was sweet and we had just the right kind of friends along to whom we could whisper, "Solitude is sweet."

We had done no formal studying, we had not added a single new bird to the list, we had not set down the wild flowers and trees we had seen, but we had taken them all in as wholes and felt once more the beneficence and healing power of the old earth.

CHAPTER XXXI

TWO NATURE WALKS IN VIRGINIA

TO lie on the ground deep in a bed of dry beech leaves, to bask in the sun of May day after weeks of cold spring weather, to look at the sky through the branches of the oak, the little leaves at the most exquisite stage of gray and pink, to watch the broad Potomac in flood moving resistlessly toward the sea, to have friends along whose eyes miss nothing of the dramatic panorama, and not to care for a little whether school keeps or not, or the printer's devil is ever fed again, this is my symphony—a symphony of rest and gladness.

We reached Washington on the eve of May first. A long night's rest hardly sufficed to get the tired out of the bones. The cardinals and purple finches on the window ledge after sunflower seeds, the wood thrushes singing in the oaks outside our bedroom windows, hardly created a thrill. I wanted nothing and nobody except to be left alone. Even the news that two of our best friends were going on a nature walk down into Virginia toward Mount Vernon did not stir me in the least. And when the Madame broke the news that we were to follow them on the 11 a. m. trolley, I had to count twenty-seven before I could say anything fit to hear.

The thousands who take the Mount Vernon trolley do not realize the charm of the country through which it passes. The banks of the Potomac below Washington are still fairly wild. There are plantations and country places here and there, but also miles of marsh and woodland "unimproved." Following the river bank one can stir up all manner of wild life, and find

all kinds of odd things. Here lies an old wreck of a house-boat. Just beyond is anchored the boat of a bootlegger or a sportsman—it is fun to guess which. For considerable distances there is no sign of human habitation except the occasional houses far away on the Maryland side.

Our friends boarded our car at Bellhaven. B. is a powerfully built man, just struggling back to enjoyment of life after months of torturing illness and more torturing treatment. An expert on optics, attached to the Navy, he put in fearfully long days and nights during the war and absorbed odd poisons from the colors he worked with until the perfect machinery with which nature endowed him went all askew. At the worst stage of his treatment last winter I wrote him that I considered him a hero. He energetically repudiated the word as applied to himself, saying that it must be reserved for those who voluntarily do or bear some great thing. "A man who faces bravely what he can't help facing," he wrote, "deserves no special credit." Hero or no, he is a man all through, a fine scientist, an original thinker, a modest gentleman, a delightful comrade.

To do justice to M., his wife, would take an entire edition of the paper, and so I will not try. Clear-headed and loyal-hearted, she is the kind that stands by 100 per cent in days of evil report and good report. She can carry the pack if necessary and in these days of convalescence will not stir until it is on her own back. And she has an eye that matches that of the Madame. The two of them roll up the curtain for me on many a dramatic happening in nature, which I otherwise would miss.

We were watching the Potomac. The snow storm up in the Cumberland Valley the week before had raised it to the danger stage. Up in Washington the army engineers were mobilizing their forces to pro-

tect the city. Down where we were walking the channel was so broad that there was little danger. Branches, drift-wood, logs, debris of many kinds, went floating by. All at once M. pointed to the river about forty feet out, and we saw a snake, head up like a fabled sea-serpent, coming almost directly for us. We realized that there was something queer about it and then saw that there was an eel flapping in its mouth. We watched the snake, perhaps five feet long, come ashore, wriggle through the mud and finally disappear under some bushes. "Probably not a moccasin," said B. "Not quite chunky enough or red enough." "But there are moccasins here," he added. Ten minutes later M. hailed us again and showed us another snake in the river, running like a submarine in the rough water on a course parallel to our path, now with just a section of the back exposed, and then with the head once more out of water. "Another snake," she said, "after another eel."

B. said that M. had a marvelous intuitive sense for snakes and could lead him to them any day. He was thankful she did not drink, if drinking, as alleged, increased one's ability to see snakes.

Settled down in a new spot near some dark pines, we had just relaxed when the most blood-curdling screeching brought us to our feet—all but M. She was sitting where she could see the forest rumpus—nothing more serious than a belligerent crow attacking a black crowned night heron which was snoozing away the bright noon hours—perhaps near a rookery. At any rate the heron departed with a great flapping over our heads and circled out over the water while the crow silently fled back into the deep woods.

These unexpected peeps behind the scenes are what make nature study so fascinating. Even if one feels rather ashamed that he has to depend on some one else to interpret the play and the actors, he is glad

to be in on it at all, and realizes that little by little he is learning to see for himself.

We came upon the hooded warbler, saw him as we generally see warblers, flitting rapidly about, and then we sat down to rest. Soon the little fellow came back and played around—posing in the most engaging way. Warblers always have been sour grapes to me—so high up, so hidden, so small, so everlastingly on the go that I can not see them, but this little hooded warbler with his yellow face peering out from his black hood and his bright olive green plumage, so friendly and unafraid, so willing to be seen, quite converted me to warblers and put me in the fellowship of those who love these little birds.

B. and M. got a list of sixty-eight birds for the day. We had forty-six, not so bad for the quieter hours of early afternoon.

B. ought to have gone directly home, but when we reached Potomac Park, Washington, he insisted on our getting down at the Tidal Basin just a little south of the White House to see some rare water birds. At first we thought they had disappeared, for hundreds of motors were passing and repassing and a little swan-boat was chugging around where we expected to see them. But we were well content without the rare water birds. I do not know a lovelier spot on earth in early springtime than Potomac Park with its Lincoln Memorial, its Washington Monument, its far views along the Potomac, its wealth of trees and flowers and sky and reflecting water—over all of which the dome of the Capitol keeps ceaseless watch by night and day. A flight of yellow warblers had just come from the South and the trees were alive with them. A flight of hermit thrushes B. said had stopped there a day or two before. We were looking for red-breasted mergansers, one male and twenty-three females, which had been there a few

days. One moment there were none in sight. The next twelve females popped up from under the water. We watched them a long time, diving, reappearing, turning quickly as people approached the edge of the basin near them, taking wing as the swan-boat chugged up, but coming down again on the other side of the basin. A member of the Federal Reserve Board, who is dealing with the most intricate financial problems, motored up, his wife at the wheel, and put his glasses on these birds which are so seldom seen in the District. This man bears his burdens more easily because now and then he steals an hour for the out-of-doors. I have not the slightest doubt but what wiser judgments come out of that board room in the gloomy old Treasury Building because the mergansers and grebes fly in there now and then on the retina of his eye.

B. put his powerful glass (a sixteen which he made himself) on two birds across the basin, and said that they were the hooded grebes we were also looking for. Very obligingly they stayed close to the wall while we walked around and came up on them so close that glasses were unnecessary. Holboell's grebe, said to be in the basin this year, we did not see.

It was 7 o'clock when we reached home, but my "tired" was completely deliquesced. If my readers do not know this fine old word which I have just learned, they should begin the study of trees.

We were early to bed and fortunately, for a whippoorwill "went off" at 4.30 the next morning like a loud alarm clock directly under our window. "At least a dozen times," the Madame said, he repeated his phrase. "Three dozen if he did it once," I replied. "Isn't this luck?" said the Madame. "I have not heard the song in twenty years." I never had heard it and I am not likely to forget it. He never paused for breath, he never missed a beat, he ordered poor Will whipped in tones that brooked no excuses or

delay. Whippoorwills in the heart of Washington—what a meeting of country and city! Chapman says: "He gives his notes with unexpected snap and vigor." He is heard frequently just "before sunrise."

When he finished the wood thrushes, apparently on every one of our oaks, and in the shrubbery beneath, burst forth in full song, answering one another back and forth, the cardinal chimed in, the flicker rattled his castanets, the grackles clanged the cymbals, the robins played the piccolo and the starlings imitated a dozen other birds at once.

The German-Irish fliers were in town, but that made no difference with a nature walk. This time we went with the nature section of the Twentieth Century Club—a dozen ladies with two or three men who were permitted to come along. The "Admiral," as we love to call him, a retired Commander of the Navy, and his wife, who has kept house all over the world and cast anchor at last in Washington, are the leaders of this group. They help lead also in the five big walks which the Audubon Society arranges each spring. With them are associated a little group of men and women who not only passionately love the out-of-doors, but have an intense desire to share the joy they find. These nature walks are a combination of "hike," of "tramping university," and of old-fashioned picnic. They do great good and give great pleasure.

We were lucky about the fliers. As we got off the trolley at Twelfth St. and Pennsylvania Ave. we heard the screech of sirens and saw an escort of motorcycle policemen almost on us. We had just time to reach the curb before they swept past. Solid red-faced Koehl was on the side toward us, the dapper Fitzmaurice in the middle in uniform, and the slender von Huenefeld on the other side. They were on their way to Bolling Field for the first engagement of a

busy day. The crowds which greeted them later in the day had not yet assembled.

Our trip was to a marsh along the Potomac between Washington and Arlington. This marsh is bordered by railroad tracks and dingy buildings, and on one side is used as a dump. The Gehenna fire of the dump outside of Jerusalem, which so long bolstered up the doctrine of everlasting hell, was burning here. In this unlikely place, we saw birds which some of us had never seen before, like the American bittern and the least bittern, as well as some of the water fowl seen often on the Potomac, like the scaup, the coot, and the Gadwell ducks, the green heron, and the greater and lesser yellow-legs. The Florida gallinules cackled provokingly in swampy thickets almost under us, but could not be induced to come out.

Up from the marshes near the river, on the way to Arlington, we came to the Arlington Experimental Farms of the Agricultural Department—rich beautiful alluvial fields in the midst of which are set a farmhouse and farm buildings surrounded by a lovely lawn.

On this lawn we lay resting, lazily identifying the different conifers, and watching the chippies, the song sparrows, the white-throated sparrows and the little Englishmen hopping about. Suddenly one of those things happened which happen only once or twice in a decade. A white-crowned sparrow hopped in sight under a young pine. Everybody got one good look and then two mules put all the birds to flight. Search as we might we saw him no more. This aristocrat of sparrows breeds far north around Hudson Bay, or up in the mountains of Canada farther south. There were sixty-two birds for the day—not bad for May second, but the white-crowned sparrow easily made the climax.

We might sadly reflect on the obvious fact that

too often in this world prosaic mules put white-crowned sparrows to flight. But Pollyanna might justly point out that maybe we never would have seen him at all if other mules in other places had not sent him our way. At any rate, we did have that one ecstatic moment and satiety did not dull the edge of joy.

We walked away from the farmhouse along an avenue of willow oaks, just fifty of them—the buds bursting here also. Through the trees we could see dense masses of people packed around the Arlington Amphitheater and cars parked along the roads going up the hill. Soon distant cheering told us that the fliers had come to lay their wreaths at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Keeping under the big trees and away from the roads, we avoided the crowd, saw a few more warblers, and at last reached the old Lee mansion.

Of that view back over Washington, I have written many times. On a day when the sun shines and when the spring has really started and the little leaves are showing on every tree and bush, and Arlington is glorious with flowering shrubs, one can not fail to be deeply moved. From this standpoint what is sordid, selfish, and vulgar in our civilization recedes and what is fine and heroic appears in better perspective.

The crowd was at the new marble amphitheater. We were at the old open air amphitheater, roofed this day with wonderful purple wistaria in full bloom. From study of detail, single leaves and stems, buds and seed pods, pencilings over the eyes of birds and marks on wing and breast, we had come to a view which took in marsh and experimental farm, Washington as a whole shining in the afternoon sun, the woods and slopes of Arlington just beneath, airplanes soaring, motors flashing by on the roads below, a great company of the living and the dead around us.

The whole was richer because we had been looking at the parts and the parts fell better into place because we had the view of the whole. And so it is with all of life. Without details we become visionary and without wholes we become one-sided. Life is more than the song of a mocking-bird or a glimpse of a sparrow, but without sympathy with the least of God's creatures we can not be made perfect.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE FRIENDLY FOLKS OF MARYLAND

RAIN when I took the local train at Longwood, rain when I changed to the Federal Express at the Back Bay, rain beating on the window of the Pullman as I put out my light and hauled down my flag for another day, dense fog late in the night "somewhere along the Sound" when I raised the shade and peered out into the gloom.

Thanks to the tunnels, we went under the East River and under the North River early in the morning of the day when ten great ocean-going vessels were damaged or beached in New York harbor by collisions caused by the fog.

Doubtful weather in Baltimore when I climbed down to get a cup of coffee and some corn muffins (for the Federal Express southbound carries no diner after daylight saving starts), and the morning papers brought the prediction: "Local thunder storms for Washington and vicinity."

This trip I was not even going home to leave my baggage before starting on a nature walk. Orders had come through to join the last field excursion of the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia at Fifteenth and G Streets, N. W., and I was to check my bag and proceed to the rendezvous. But I took out my heavy rubbers and my old overcoat for emergencies.

The clouds seemed to be breaking when we rolled into Washington. At the gate stood "the Colonel" waiting. Only a devoted brother would turn out with his car for a 7.25 a. m. sleeper. "Fifteenth and H, northeast," I said. "Sure it's northeast?" said the

Colonel. "J. said northwest." "Northeast," I replied quickly, "I've had it written down for two months." So we sat in the car at Fifteenth and H Streets northeast where the pike starts for Baltimore until I saw a big Baltimore electric car pass by. "Northwest quick," I said, suddenly coming to myself. "This is all wrong." And in spite of innumerable "stop and go" signs, the Colonel dropped me at the right meeting place, thirty blocks away, with one minute to spare, and then went on home with the baggage.

Over fifty of us boarded trolley cars for an excursion northeast of Washington into Maryland, with the University of Maryland the objective. I found that Dr. T. S. Palmer, president of the Audubon Society and a distinguished biologist, had turned out for this last walk. He was laughing heartily when he greeted me. Said he: "The prescription you mailed 'the Admiral' for poison ivy did the business." "What was it?" clamored some of the others. So I repeated it then and do so now, hoping to hit all types of need: "Prayer and grease for mild cases. Profanity and permanganate for severe."

Since I had seen him "the Admiral" had suffered much from "P. I.," as we call it for short, his eyes being almost closed and his nose all out of shape, but here he was game as ever for the thickets. To him and his wife, both masters of identification and full of the noblest social spirit, much of the success of these walks is due.

B. and M., of whom I have written previously, were there, M. with her pack well stuffed for her convalescent husband, Mrs. Mc., up in the seventies, who never misses a walk, Mrs. A., who has found in nature and poetry and the good God and devoted friends adequate strength for crushing sorrow, Mr. S., an expert on mollusks for the Smithsonian and a well

rounded scientist as well as leader of the boys, two literary ladies, Mrs. W. and Mrs. E., the one a contributor to the *Leader* and *Congregationalist*, the other to a journal of opinion in London, Dr. R., a friend of the Colonel and professor in one of our colleges, who with his young daughter trailing him goes out with the parties but hunts on his own, and Dr. C., a Presbyterian minister recently back from China, and his talented wife, as interesting a public speaker as he is himself.

There were bright young Normal College girls fitting themselves for their life work, and some of their teachers with them, and children of members who started coming because it was a "kind of picnic" and who have kept it up because they gradually have caught the spirit. One of these beginners of a few years ago, now in his first year at college, is becoming an authority whom the scientists begin to trust and quote. Up at daybreak, he ferrets out the haunts of the rare wild birds for miles around Washington, and leads one to them. "Hawkeye," now fourteen, and Ruth, eleven, and a dozen other youngsters are starting up that same trail.

In the beginning on such a walk one feels rather strange, but out-of-door folks have a common bond, and nobody stands on ceremony.

These large parties are broken up into groups of a dozen or less under trained leaders. They take different routes for the morning and come together for lunch, when the roll of birds on the check list is called and the number of species which have been seen is counted up.

The walk at the University of Maryland is always unique. It is less in the wilds and more along the streets of a little village, and over an extensive college campus and farm lands.

The college property stretches away from the

trolley across the pike and up a beautiful ridge from the top of which one can look for several miles. Down near the trolley tracks there is quite a college community. The professor of zoology, Dr. Truitt, and a number of the students formed a reception committee and took us about. The state entomologist, Professor Cory, was backing his car out of his driveway to start for his day's work, but stopped to meet us. The lawns and gardens of these cultured college people were beautiful out-of-doors museums.

I do do not remember a walk when we saw so many interesting birds' nests close together—redstart, cardinal, catbird, song sparrow, kildeer.

One bird mother wrought with greatest care, another with a devil-may-care bravado. The nest of the redstart was an exquisite little thing made of bits of bark, down and tiny root tendrils. That of the kildeer was little more than the bare ground. One sought safety in the deepest thicket, the other by nesting where nobody would ever dream of looking.

Discovering the nest of the kildeer was a unique experience for most of the party. Professor T. took us to a vacant village lot. Carpenters were hammering away at a new house on one side, and motors passing by on another side. It took fifty people some time to discover where the mother kildeer had laid her eggs. Finally Dr. R. saw the eggs lying in the midst of some broken glass. There was nothing to attract attention—a bit of a hollow with a little grass and a stick or two around it. Here lay two dark mottled eggs of this interesting bird. Poor thing, she was flying about uttering piercing cries, and Dr. P., moved by her distress, had the party quickly look and move on. Then we saw her go back. Not directly—no, she was far too intelligent for that—but in a roundabout way, casually, as if a nest were the last thing in the world she sought, and then when

OUR HOUSE AT THE LITTLE HILL FARM
Beards Hollow, N. Y.

she came to it squatting down quickly and becoming almost invisible.

The kildeer belongs to the plover family. It is a large, beautiful bird, reddish brown and greyish brown in color, with much white underneath and a striking ring around the neck. "Although by no means shy," says Chapman, "it never seems to gain confidence in man, and at his approach always gives voice to its fear." Of this power to make a vociferous outcry we had an admirable demonstration.

A fine old professor had been out cutting his asparagus. He had one of those good old English names which spell one thing and mean another. Said he, "Every other day I cut asparagus, and we have much more than we can use." Standing with us in the middle of the well shaded highway, he told us about a bed of beautiful broom—the yellow flower so common along the hedges in England and Scotland, and famous as the flower of the Plantagenets. "I brought these plants up from Yorktown, Va.," he said. "The seeds which produced their ancestors came over in the hay for the horses of Cornwallis." Sent to investigate the necessity of legislation to forbid the planting of broom, he reported that there was no evidence that it had spread in a way to be a menace. He found it mainly in old pastures or on abandoned and neglected farms.

During the morning we found many wild flowers —bluets, white and purple violets, purple vetch, yellow cynthia, yellow sorrel and one patch of spring beauties still blooming.

The last part of the morning we followed the banks of Paint Run up to the Baltimore Pike. Here in a lush meadow we came upon a "flight of bobolinks." We counted at least a hundred on the west side of the pike without bothering with those on the east side at all—more bobolinks than I had seen in all

the rest of my life, and in the ratio of about ten glorious beautiful males to one more sober female. Swaying up and down on the stronger stalks, rising a little way in full song and settling back in the deep grass—they were a beautiful sight. In the fall the males take on the sober plumage of their mates. Here they were in the full glory of buff and black and white. Professor T. sent one of his boys in to circle around and drive them up to show us how many there were, but they did not act much afraid. They merely rose a little way, circled back and again burst into song. "They have come," said Professor P., "from Brazil. They are on their way to New York and Canada." "Last year," he continued, "was the first year we had succeeded in getting legislation to give this bird full protection. Before that they were shot by the hundred as reed birds."

The sun by this time was beating down fiercely, motor cars were roaring by in each direction, the pike was neither a safe nor a comfortable place to linger, but it was hard to get the party past this remarkable exhibition of bobolinks.

In the deep shade cast by three or four wonderful old English elms, we sat down on stone wall and lawn to eat our sandwiches and cookies. Soon the indefatigable professor of zoology appeared with some of his students, bringing ice cold sweet milk, chocolate milk and buttermilk, unlimited quantities of it, and large paper cups, with chocolate and vanilla ice cream following hard after—all from the dairy of the Agricultural Department.

Then appeared the new president, Dr. Pearson, to welcome us officially, and Professor Patterson, one of the veterans of the school.

There were no lengthy speeches, but Dr. Pearson told us something about the work of a great university and the ways in which it tries to give boys and girls

an interest in the world in which they live. Professor Palmer spoke for the Audubon Society—tying up in a remarkable way the names of some of the birds we had just seen with the history of Maryland, especially the Baltimore oriole and the Maryland yellowthroat, and expressing the thanks of the club for the gracious hospitality.

One section of the University of Maryland started in Baltimore in 1806, and another section on this site in 1856. Now all departments have been brought together here at College Park. Back in the eighteenth century the administration building before which we sat was Rossburg Inn, on the old stagecoach road between Washington and Philadelphia. From an inn it was evolved into the center from which go out the directing impulses of the higher educational system of the state.

Two parties went off in the afternoon for the wilder parts of the region, one for a three-hour trip, the other for an expedition half as long. We had had enough of it. We stayed where we were. The grass was too soft, the shade too grateful.

I had been reading on the train "The Second Book of Modern Verse," edited by Jessie Rittenhouse, and I read a few of the poems aloud to a circle which quickly formed. One of them, by Sara Teasdale, was beautiful but did not fit the mood of my hearers:

"There will come soft rain and the smell of the ground
And swallows circling with their shimmering sound;

"And frogs in the pools singing at night,
And wild plum trees in tremulous white.

"Robins will wear their feathery fire
Whistling their whims in a low fence wire.

"And not one will know of the war, not one
Will care when it is done.

"Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree,
If mankind perished utterly.

"And spring herself when she woke at dawn,
Would scarcely know that we were gone."

Two verses by David Morton seemed to better meet our need:

"My faith is all a doubtful thing,
Wove on a doubtful loom—
Until there comes, each showery spring,
A cherry tree in bloom;

"And Christ who died upon a tree
That death had stricken bare,
Comes beautifully back to me,
In blossoms, everywhere."

Other little poems which interpreted things for us as we sat there were "The Day Before April," by Mary Carolyn Davies, "Blind," by Harry Kemp, "Idealists," by Alfred Kreymborg, and "Yellow Warblers," by Katharine Lee Bates.

A cuckoo, so hard to find when one hunts for him, came and sat on the telegraph wire almost over us. H. B., the boy whose eyes miss little in nature, pointed him out to us. It seemed as if he said to us: "Overmuch hunting won't do you any good. Part of it lies in being still and taking what comes." He was the black-billed cuckoo more common in the North—the one that I had seldom seen.

We were starting home when Professor Truitt told us about the nest of the screech owl in an old oak back of the infirmary. We climbed the long hill in the hot sun and were well repaid. For when we put our glasses on the hole of the oak indicated, *Otus Asio Asio* junior, hatched out only two days before, stuck out his little head with an air of preternatural

wisdom, took one look at us and drew back in the welcome darkness of his oaken cave. I admit we were a rather hot, bedraggled lot, but he ought not to have made us feel it so keenly.

Theodore Roosevelt the senior in one of his essays defended this lovely little bird, and expressed regret that any one had ever given it such a name. Even Chapman has yielded enough to the popular prejudice to write: "When night comes on, one may hear the screech owl's tremulous wailing whistle. It is a weird, melancholy call, welcomed only by those who love Nature's voice whatever may be the medium through which she speaks."

Accustomed to the screech owl from boyhood, hearing it night after night around the old home, I have come to like it, and welcome it as one of the night sounds which tells us of the abundant life of Mother Nature and the great drama unfolding steadily in the darkness as in the light.

This was the last field excursion of the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia for the season. It made the members realize anew in what a garden spot the University of Maryland has been located, how much of interest there is to see in village and on farm land, what open spaces there are still close to the Federal City, how much we owe to the scientists of the Government, both state and national, and what an atmosphere of welcome is created always by the friendly folk of Maryland.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE ANTI-MOLLYCODDLE CLUB

ROOSEVELT came to Washington as President in the fall of 1901, during my second year as pastor of the Washington church. From that time on he was the most vivid, dynamic, interesting personality in a city always full of strong and interesting men. There probably never was such a President for the younger generation. Cowboys and wild Indians, Rough Riders and San Juan Hill, big game hunting and daring riding—all were associated with Roosevelt. He brought color, adventure, picturesqueness, into life. One of the many words he put on the front pages of the newspapers was mollycoddle.

So it was natural that we should name a Sunday school class organized during the Roosevelt administration "The Anti-Mollycoddle Club."

There were never more than ten of these boys, but some of the best times I had in Washington are associated with them.

Later there were girls in the class, and some of the girls married some of the boys, but that is a different story. Here we are concerned with the boys.

Generally we took a tramp on Saturday afternoons and sometimes we went off for an all day excursion.

Often we followed the wild and beautiful gorge of Rock Creek. Occasionally we went to some historic spot like the old dueling ground or the Bladensburg battle-field. Then again we would cross the Potomac and follow up the Virginia side, the roughest, hardest tramping we ever did, with much climbing of cliffs

and clambering over big boulders. Also, on the Maryland side of the river we had the Chesapeake and Potomac Canal, with a most interesting old tow path. One of the principles on which the club was founded was that "it does not hurt you to get your feet wet." Another was that it is the part of "an antimollycoddle to pile straight through" whatever lies in the way—a stream waist deep or the dense underbrush. Probably if we had gone to some of the places in Africa or South America where our great hero went we should have had to change our principles or temper courage with wisdom, but in the region where we tramped we could indulge our contempt for the trails, roads and bridges, and get up quite a fine healthy glow of independence over it.

Once in a great while we would cook a beefsteak or fry a pan of Hamburg steak along some wild rocky cove of the Potomac. Then, on the days when we had taken no food with us, and we were returning home hungry as bears, and night was coming on and we had a mile or so to go yet, what a riot would ensue if some bold spirit should begin to tell about that snapping hot beefsteak and those baked potatoes of the last feast!

Once in a while also we would get belated, and the mothers would do some telephoning around among themselves to keep up their courage, but generally they trusted us fully.

As I look back at those tramps I regret that what little knowledge I have of forestry, botany, and ornithology came along so late in life, and that I did not do more for the boys in these branches—teach them to observe, compare, classify and understand the things we saw. We were strong on bold outlines, hills, mountains, water courses, woods, villages. We got the views, both near and far, but not the details of our pictures. The new emphasis on natural science

in the public schools to-day is giving the present generation a boost along these lines that we never had.

And yet how much that Anti-Mollycoddle Club meant to us. We enjoyed or endured the Sunday school lesson the next day better because of the bonds of comradeship forged on our walks. In any emergency of discipline in the church or school which might arise it was easy to mobilize the sentiment of this group of boys back of the right action. They were "for the administration" (of the church), not "agin it," because the leader of the club was the pastor of the church. There is not likely to be any insurmountable difficulty if the boys are back of you. The parents of the boys first, and later the boys themselves, told me what the club did for them. It put in them a love of the out of doors, it gave them self-reliance, it developed a sense of team play, it made them sportsmen in the fine old-fashioned sense of the word—clean, manly, honorable fellows.

I grew very fond of the boys, and although I seldom see them or hear from them now, I know where they are and what they are doing. They are scattered all over the country, even over seas, but they never come where I am that they do not at least call up "to report."

My own young brother was one of the boys. At the time he was attending the Manual Training High School. Now he is up in New York, well established with a big business concern, delving into the problem of commercial fertilizers for farmers, and happy in his work. He married a Washington kindergartner and they have a John and a Katherine we all love.

One of the boys, H. B., the heavy built one who lunged so impulsively when a call came on one of our walks to "run," lunged head on into a fast moving B. & O. engine when he was running for a trolley car. That was our only casualty and that happened while

we still were all together but not on one of our walks. Good-natured, lovable, the patient butt of many a joke because of his bulk, he is a tender and beautiful memory.

His particular chum, G. B. K., went straight from high school to business, had his ups and downs, but quietly, persistently, built up a printing business and advertising service in Washington, the only one of the boys to stay in the Capital. And I should say that one in ten is about the ratio that stays.

P. C. G. was the "worst boy," after Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn, in modern history for pranks, until his own boy came along, and his "own boy" threw his father in the shade as effectively as he threw the cat out of the window where he was visiting. P. C. G. had a mind like a steel trap. Nothing ever got by him. He took chemical engineering in the U. of P., but quickly went into business and is one of the heads of departments in a world famous corporation. But the friendly qualities which endeared him to us are as much responsible for his success as his brains.

Another mind of first water was F. H. K.—only son of a Vermont manufacturer, retired and living in Washington, and the only child of a mother who idolized him. He made a good record in Princeton. It was agony for him when the war came on not to go instantly, but his mother's doctors put the screws on him. Eventually he broke loose and when he did go in he went the limit and chose aviation. He came out alive with a good record, and has made a real success in the automobile business. He made just as great a success in marriage, and has a delightful home.

R. B. W. and J. W. W. both went to Tufts for engineering, both entered the national army in the war, both came out with fine records and commissions in the regular army. Both are happy in the careers they have chosen. The first often laughs when he

thinks how he hated acoustics in college, and how the lines of his lot have led him to specialize in acoustics in the army, in submarine detectors and other intricate things connected with sound. With one of the best little mothers in the world, the first of these boys has not yet married. With an equally brave and good little mother, but who left him when he was a young lad, and for whom I said the last words, the other boy found a noble helpmeet about as soon as he was established. I was guardian for the second of these boys and for his sister, and, although it seemed an awful nuisance sometimes, I felt repaid a thousand times as I came to see how they developed. So must it have been with our parents—if we turned out a credit to them.

Two brothers from Duluth showed up later—R. S. L. and J. W. L. The older brother went to Tufts and took the engineering course, became a captain in the national army, did his bit, re-entered civil life, married one of our Sunday school girls, and landed on the Pacific Coast, where he is in the engineering department of the city of Los Angeles. His younger brother, just as good a student, seldom went on the walks, for he developed heart trouble. With great good sense he took a job as chauffeur for the summer, soon had tempting offers from a rich New York man, and is driving for him to-day, a well, strong fellow with a happy little family. Both of his boys he brought back to Washington for me to christen.

Two other brothers were with us for a time—neither strong for church, but both strong for the class, for the club, and for their leader. They were the most independent boys of all—naturally suspicious of any theological nonsense, but greatly interested in the out of doors. The younger, whom I never knew intimately, M. D., went into scientific

farming and is doing well. The older, W. D., is responsible for these reminiscences. His new book,* "The Story of Copper," lies before me on the desk as I write.

On the title page is an inscription which greatly pleases me: "To J— from W— in grateful appreciation of the days when you helped me appreciate the world."

Teachers and friends of boys who make good are quite inclined to exaggerate the part they have played in "training the young idea how to shoot," and I do not want to fall into that error, but an inscription like this on a beautiful, useful, fascinating book produced by one of the old boys, sends a fine feeling pulsating through the nerves. As I read the book the feeling is deepened. This boy loved science, gave himself to it in college, married a lovely girl who studied science with him in G. W. U., started out in one of the most scientific bureaus of the Government, the Bureau of Standards, began to write popular science paragraphs for a local paper, and soon was syndicating them. Six years ago a weekly publication** dedicated to the great task of summarizing and popularizing current science took him into the news department, and to-day he is managing editor of that useful paper, so much consulted in schools, libraries and clubs.

For the new book, his chief, Edwin E. Slosson, Director of Science Service and author of many books, writes the introduction, and in a few words gives us a

---

*"The Story of Copper," by Watson Davis, C. E., Managing Editor, Science Service. The Century Company, New York and London. Price $3.00.

**Science News Letter, Science Service Inc. 1918. Harford Avenue, Baltimore, Md., and 21st and B Streets, Washington, D. C.

clear idea of the beauty, the historic significance and utility of copper. " 'Not worth a copper,' " he says, "is the nadir of value, yet copper is worth much to the world, and never more than now in this Age of Electricity."

How well W. D. can write may be seen in the first three paragraphs of the book:

> About ten thousand years ago, not so long in the life of humanity, some Neolithic man selected a chunk of reddish "rock" from a crevice in the earth and found that this strange material made a battle mallet that was superior to the stones of his adversaries. He sang the praises of the new "rock" to his tribesmen, and in the secrecy of night, perhaps, his group of stone age warriors quarried and armed themselves with better weapons of a new era.
>
> What amoeba could predict man? And what first copper-using tribesman could see, three hundred generations in the future, a modern copper-capped city, sending light, heat, and power through copper, talking and singing over copper, drawing on copper pictures that multiply themselves a thousand times, and using copper coins by the millions?
>
> Probably the news of the new red "stone" and the place that it would be found leaked out in time, through a new age warrior who was careless enough to get captured by the old age enemy. Then the metallic age began in earnest. The Neolithic man became eometalic man, or, to translate the anthropologist's and my improvised Greek, the man of the late stone age transformed himself into the first man of a new and wonderful age of metals.

The finest fruit of many fields adorns his pages. His skill makes the story of copper a dramatic recital.

No, I insist, dear reader, that it is not a case of an old hen, or an old duck, clucking over its wonderful progeny. These boys have made good, and this book of W. D. just fills me with enthusiasm. I know

life is worth while when I see how much such boys can accomplish. They add to truth, free minds, enrich living.

The philosophy which runs through the book is the philosophy to which I hold fast—"a world that is worth while," "co-operation in making it more worth while."

We used to talk about that kind of thing in the class. Probably the lessons we deduced most frequently from whatever text we were studying were:

"It is not enough to be good. We must be good for something," and "We must all hang together. If we don't we will all hang separately."

The Editor Afield

CHAPTER XXXIV

A WEEK END IN BUCKSPORT

AN old town on the east bank of the Penobscot River eighteen miles south of Bangor, at a big bend of the stream, a Main Street down at the heels running parallel to the water, large houses which look as if they had been built by sea captains and set to command a view of the channel, a Methodist seminary on the hill-top, great elms, magnificent views, a hospitable people and many memories—that is Bucksport, Maine.

Once it had four or five thousand people. To-day it numbers between two and three thousand.

The river divides at Bucksport and the two channels make Verona Island—a place for camps and cottages and in the old days for camp meetings. Verona is a bit to one side and does not obstruct the view from the village down the steamboat channel. The daily arrival of the boat from Boston is a sight worth watching for—the steamer poking her nose around the bend a mile or so away, then coming up the broad water between picturesque wooded banks headed straight for the village, and at last curving around almost at right angles to her course so as to reach her dock.

There is an old fort across the river, making a beautiful background for the picture—steep banks, well-kept turf and massive walls, which no one, however, could use as a fort to-day.

For many years we have been going to Bucksport. As a girl the Madame knew the place because an older brother married a Bucksport girl. The Madame's friends became my friends. On the way to the Maine

woods, or coming home, we often have stopped in Bucksport for a few days. Early in our married life we visited two of the closest of these friends, who lived in one of the large, old-fashioned houses for which the place is famous. This year we have been lucky enough to have a week end there, staying at one of the best little hotels in the state of Maine. As practically every room is taken every night, and as on pleasant Sundays they have to turn people away, I can not be accused of trying to boost their business. Let a man make a mouse-trap better than any other mouse-trap and the world will beat a path to his door. Let a man and woman take an ancient inn overlooking a lovely river, plant pink petunias in flower boxes along the railing of the porch, hire a chef who can hold his own with Oscar and the famous chefs of history, keep the place spotlessly clean, charge moderate prices, and oversee it in person, and such paths will be worn to it that they will have to close the place in the autumn to catch their breath for the next summer.

We had intended to go down from Boston on a Thursday night by one of the sturdy Bangor boats, but a West Indian hurricane cavorting up the coast scared us out. The boats went through all right, but we were on the Bangor sleeper instead. We have no great fear of storms in mid ocean, but we do not like to be close to shore in a bad blow. Said an ex-sailor man in the wash room of the Pullman that morning as we reached Bangor, "I used to go out with the trawlers, and in a hard storm we always ran a hundred miles out to sea and headed up into the wind."

We missed the picturesque sail along the coast from Rockland and Camden and Belfast, over Penobscot Bay and up the Penobscot River. Instead we had an early morning ride down the branch line of

the Maine Central from Bangor, along the bluffs overlooking the river, traveling in one of the new motor coaches propelled by a gasoline engine. We had few passengers but tons of mail. Stopping at little stations to throw off the mail sacks gave us a chance to see the country.

Our route was through a garden of wild flowers, the yellows predominating, the buttercup, the evening primrose, golden-rod, the black-eyed Susan, tansy and false dandelion. It seems unjust for man to call a lovely yellow flower—perfectly genuine—"false." It is an echo of some false instinct in the one who gave it a name. Besides these yellow flowers there were the everlasting, the hardhack, joe-pye-weed and white and purple asters, meadow-sweet, wild carrot, silver-rod, daisies, and several kinds of clover.

The leaves, except on a single maple, had not begun to turn, but the fruit of the sumach, the crab-apple, the choke cherry, the wild cherry, the mountain ash, gave us dazzling bits of color. It was not a good agricultural country, but a region of camps and summer homes, of lumbering and grazing. Here and there we whizzed by a pasture, a grain field, or a potato patch. Almost anywhere one could have started a high grade stone quarry. But the curves of the Penobscot, the dark shores opposite, the mountains in the background, the ospreys and gulls looking for breakfast, the heavy dew on flowers and thickets, and the sun coming out to light up the scene, gave glory to a journey rather dreaded by travelers who stick close to Pullman cars.

From Friday morning until Sunday afternoon we stayed at the little hotel, eating, sleeping, tramping and visiting with our friends. Then boarding the boat at 3.30 we were in Boston in the morning ready for work.

The night that we failed to take the boat was a night when all the stars were out. It was marvelously clear. The night we elected to travel back by the boat we had thunder, lightning, rain, fog, the fog horn and a heavy swell. The ocean liner from Liverpool lay outside fourteen hours before venturing in that morning when we landed—but we came in on time.

In the Buck Memorial Library on the Main Street of Bucksport, I found a typewritten copy of an address delivered on July 4, 1857, by Rufus Buck, in which he told the story of the founding of the town.

For long years the Penobscot River was a dividing line between the French pushing down from Quebec and the English pushing up from Massachusetts. In 1603 the French established a trading post at Mount Mansel and Mount Desert. In 1604, they built a post at the mouth of the broad river which the Indians called Penobscot—probably at Castine. Oliver Cromwell's soldiers drove out the French in 1654. Charles the Second gave the territory back to France in 1667. The Dutch drove out the French and the English drove out the Dutch. Between 1626 and 1781, French, Dutch, English and Colonials held Castine. Boston men under Governor Pownall in 1759 built a fort named Fort Pownall at Fort Point, a few miles below Bucksport. This fort became a great trading center. In 1776, British soldiers demolished the fort and ended the trading, but it was this fort which indirectly brought about the settlement of Bucksport. Massachusetts men who had helped build it carried back stories of the wide waters, the "goodly land," the abundant game and fish. David Marsh of Haverhill and 352 others secured grants of land on the east bank of the river. Five Haverhill men, headed by Jonathan Buck, who is called the founder of the place, came down in August, 1762, and began the survey of Township

Number One, the first of six townships into which the grant had been divided. A single soldier straggled in and built a cabin in 1763, but the real settlement dates from 1764, when Buck built the first saw mill on the Penobscot and established his home there.

When the American Revolution broke out, Bucksport had thirty-one families. Among the names of people already there we find Fry, Couliard, Harriman, McDonald, and Page. The little settlement faced famine in 1775, when a cold summer followed a dry spring, but Massachusetts sent relief. When the Declaration of Independence was adopted Bucksport organized a company of soldiers for Washington's army. The little village of log houses was burned in 1779 by the British, after their fleet had driven an American fleet up to the head of navigation at what is now Bangor, and defeated it.

Jonathan Buck escaped with his family and made his way overland to Haverhill, and then gave himself to the American cause throughout the war. A few inhabitants went back and made their peace with the British. Once again in the War of 1812 British troops marched into the town, but this time they left without doing any damage.

Jonathan Buck and many of his descendants sleep quietly together in the old Buck Cemetery just east of the center of the village. To Jonathan Buck the elder is erected the largest monument of all. On it is the inscription:

> Col. Jonathan Buck. Born 1718. Died March 18, 1795. He was a worthy citizen. The first settler of Buckstown.
>
> No mortal flesh can e'er understand
> The power of death's impartial hand,
> But each without resistance must
> Receive the stroke and turn to dust.

Lydia Buck, "consort of the Hon. Jonathan Buck," died in 1789.

Jonathan Buck, Esq., who seems to have succeeded his father as head of the family, died in 1824 at the age of seventy-six. He was more of a church man apparently than the old pioneer. His wife Hannah deserves a monument all her own, for when she died in 1834 at the age of eighty-three they could inscribe above her grave the words: "She left all her children (eleven) to mourn the loss of a good mother." This was long before campaigns to reduce infant mortality had been thought of, the death rate among children was high, but Hannah Buck raised all of hers.

With the monuments to the Bucks, to Eleazer, Rufus, David, William, Captain John, Moses, Benjamin, and the others, there was a stone to Captain Jonathan Frye. Of him the inscription said: "Born at Andover, Mass. Graduated at Harvard College, 1761. Served four years as a Lieutenant in the Continental Army. And was one of the first settlers of Bucksport. Drowned in the Penobscot River, July 12, 1793, aged 51 years. Erected by his grandson, Phineas Barnes."

The General Court of the Province of Massachusetts incorporated Buckstown in 1792. We have the record of the first town meeting held Sept. 16, 1792. The first action taken after election of town officers was this: "Voted that all swine shall run at large yoked as the law directs. Voted that Hog reaves (village officers) shall take hogs in their custody and proceed in the same manner as Pound Keepers are by law directed." After the hogs were attended to the meeting assessed taxes for clearing roads, appointed a commissioner to take care of public lots and appropriated money "to purchase a book for the town records."

A delightful Boston lady at the hotel, engaged in looking up the old records for her children, told us that her great, great grandmother sitting by the

door of her log cabin in old Buckstown heard the pig squeal, and looking out saw a bear eating the unfortunate porker. She called the men and they drove off the bear, and brought in what was left of the pig to be "tried out" into lard. "But the pig had died so angry that the fat jumped out of the skillet."

It was not long, however, before the little pioneer community had something more important to do than elect hog reaves.

In humble ways began the industries which by the middle of the nineteenth century made Bucksport rich—lumbering, shipbuilding, fishing, commerce with all parts of the world.

In 1817, Buckstown became Bucksport. The change is significant of the change which had come over the community. The first weir had been set in the river in 1811. Fishing for shad, bass, salmon, grew into one of the important industries. The town later was a center for fishermen who went out to the Grand Banks.

Some idea of the activity which pervaded the town may be gained from the record that in 1852 three brigs, eight schooners, and one sloop were built in Bucksport.

On the slopes stretching up from the water, one by one were built the homes of owners and captains whose ships made voyages to India, China and the spice islands of the East and engaged in trade up and down the coast. Very early in the nineteenth century we find the names of the other settlers who were to carry on all these industries—Little, Pond, Spofford, Blodgett, Swazey, Folsom, Barnard and others.

Tanneries, too, became profitable, and one of these still is in operation.

But the glory of those active days has departed. Shipping declined. The last important vessel to be built in Bucksport was the "Roosevelt," for the Polar

expeditions of Commander Peary. The long sheds put up for the Roosevelt stand empty on the island. There is but little fishing. And what Bucksport sees of lumbering is pulp wood going by in fast trucks from down country to mills farther up the state.

When I asked an old citizen the economic basis of the prosperity of Bucksport to-day, he said, "None." Later he modified this by adding that the village is a trading center for camps and summer cottages, and for the farming country around. But he also said, "It is not a good farming country." Friend Brothers' cannery has been built in recent years, and gives employment to a number of people. When we were there, it was the height of the blueberry season. One farmer that morning had come in with twenty-two bushels in his Ford truck, for which he received $66, and that was only one of several trips he had made.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE CHARM OF OLD BUCKSPORT

THE charm of old Bucksport is difficult to analyze. Part of it doubtless is due to its beautiful situation on a great bend of the Penobscot River, with Mount Waldo in the background and exquisite views of wooded bluffs, shining water and distant hills. Part of it lies in the history and in the old houses full of curios brought by sea captains from the ends of the earth. The greater part of it is in the thing which gives significance to any spot on this globe—the people who live there.

They are a proud lot of folks, although simple and democratic in their ways. The remnants at least of some of the old fortunes still exist, and perhaps rather big remnants, too. But the town itself is poor. The engine-house needs paint, some of the wooden walks have rotted, and two bad fires in recent years have left their scars.

The volunteer work of the Woman's Club has resulted in new concrete pavement on the upper side of the long main street, and the Sunday that we were there a committee of the Congregational church was in the thick of a campaign for several thousand dollars with which to put new foundations under the church and to redecorate it.

In the last chapter I described the settlement in 1762 and the hardships of the early years. The little hamlet was endangered by a famine in 1775 and burned by the British in 1779. It was a hand to mouth struggle for years, but the people organized a library as early as 1806, and sent to Massachusetts for the books. That library was in existence, I believe,

for over fifty years, and not many years after it closed its doors it was succeeded by the beautiful Buck Memorial Library, one of the greatest ornaments of the community. This was given in 1887 by Mrs. Richard P. Buck and her daughter in memory of the husband and father. The library is supported by an endowment, by contributions and by public appropriations. On its board and on its book committee it has had some of the best people of the community. The existence of a library for long years in a town gives a special kind of tone or color to the place.

Bucksport also has had a school—the East Maine Conference Seminary, dating from 1848, owned by the Methodists but run for everybody.

The Methodists put up a meeting-house in Bucksport as early as 1799. The Congregationalists, the established church of New England, came along later.

The good old citizens of Bucksport in the early days did not have much surplus for churches.

In 1796 the town meeting voted to build a meeting-house, but thought better of it and reconsidered the vote. In 1797, the meeting voted not to raise any money for preaching. In 1803, times were better, or religious convictions deeper, for the meeting voted to raise $300 for preaching. The first Congregational meeting-house, according to the manuscript history, dates from 1811.

In the old days Bucksport had connections with all parts of the world. The men who lived along Main Street, or who climbed the hill to the great houses higher up, had seen India and far Cathay, had doubled the Cape of Good Hope and battled the gales around Cape Horn. They knew Europe and South America, Africa and Asia, and the Atlantic and Pacific seaboards of the United States.

Those days have passed, but Bucksport makes

connection with all parts of the country now through sons and daughters who have gone out to seek their fortune. They are known in law, in medicine, in engineering, in diplomacy, in business, in college chairs, and in many other fields.

The familiar talk at the dinner tables was about this one who was with the General Electric Company, that one who was teaching in Yale or in the University of Chicago, a woman running a New York social settlement, a rising young lawyer in New York, and so on—people who were making good in the world, most of whom had the blood of old Jonathan Buck in their veins.

Nobody can understand the United States of America who does not understand the psychology of the American town or village.

City people classify everything outside the city as country, but there is a great gap between life on the farms and life in communities of from 800 to 3,000 population.

Recent studies by sociologists show that the village is more conservative than either the country or the city. The city has the great body of laborers. The country has the mass of farmers. The Farmer-Labor parties take the lead in radical social legislation. The village stands in opposition.

Not long ago Sinclair Lewis gave us "Main Street." There was truth in "Main Street" but not all in it was the truth, and the picture drawn was not all the truth about the village.

The small towns in the Middle West, on the Pacific Coast, and in New England alike, have much about them that is commonplace, vulgar, narrow and provincial.

But out of the small towns and the little villages have come the leaders of the country. Every now and then one of them gives us a Calvin Coolidge or a

Charles Lindbergh. The cities themselves are retaining vigor by daily transfusions of country and village blood.

Unity in a recent editorial drew some morals from the careers of Lindbergh and Chamberlin, both village boys, as follows:

> Main Street is vindicated in Lindbergh and Chamberlin. The middle western town was and still is much what Sinclair Lewis made it out to be. But Lindbergh and Chamberlin are its product. And they are a multitude. Another type is Booth Tarkington's Penrod. All three are to be found in the typical middle and far western community. The Chamberlin type is a grinning, unobtrusive but ubiquitous kid, much liked and responsive among his fellows, while working his shy unobtrusiveness somewhat overtime among his elders. There are many of him. He only awaits his chance to come out. He gets into scrapes and breaks an arm or a leg occasionally, but continues to come up grinning and ready for the next exploit, always resourceful. The Lindbergh type is less numerous, but the individual now so widely known to fame is by no means an isolated phenomenon. He is not so unequivocally one of the gang. His companions do not themselves altogether and all the time understand him. The Lindbergh type is not the religious kid, the ever-faithful-attendant upon the conventional, denominational Sunday school. Nor is he tough, the swaggering disbeliever who gets his formulas from the defiant patter of his home. The home whence he emerges is not conventionally religious; the head is not a pillar of the church. But it is a home where life is taken seriously, and serious life purposes are cultivated. If the father does not stand and speak out for enlightened and progressive public measures, and get sent to Congress, he does and says something else of similar significance, and convinces the youngster that life is meant for something more than "getting on." Only catalogue the practical scholars, sober men of affairs, alert and resourceful scien-

tists, and doers in American society's big achievements, and note how many of them spent their infancy and boyhood on Main Street. Perhaps resourcefulness is the mark which shines clearest.

Our city school systems are attempting desperately to put into education something which is the birthright of boys and girls in the village and on the farm—a chance to learn by doing. In education we recognize now that the hand and eye and ear must be trained as well as the brain. Nor can the brain be trained by books alone. Morally, of course, "doing" is indispensable.

Dr. LeGrand Powers of Washington once spoke of being sent at an early age to drive a cow three miles to a neighbor's and collect the money for it, and asked the pertinent question, what either the parent or the public school could give a boy in Washington to develop that sense of responsibility which comes almost inevitably to a country boy.

In the village that I know best—a place about the size of Bucksport—there is a garden back of almost every house. There is room for chickens. Before the day of motors, everybody had a horse. The wise parent let the child take over the chicken business, or have a garden of his own, or assume responsibility for the horse. There was no shame in work. The whole atmosphere of the village was that work was the honorable thing and idleness dishonorable.

There were widows who had to have boys to help in the garden or with the wood. There were storekeepers who had to have extra help in the long school vacation. There were paper routes and laundry routes, and many a successful business man of today had his eyes opened to the difference between "good accounts" and "bad accounts," "good service" and "poor service," by doing such work.

Play also brought other kinds of responsibilities. There were fishing trips, long tramps, sometimes where the boy got lost and had to find himself. There was the old swimming hole with its pranks and its accidents, its sad drownings at times, its narrow escapes, its rescues sometimes never told about, but all contributing powerfully to the right kind of education.

Children generally went to Sunday school. At least it was not highly respectable and fashionable not to go, and that is true to-day in most villages.

There was and there is the sordid side—a greater reluctance in the village to deal frankly with sex, for example, than there is in the city, an almost complete failure, in my boyhood, at least, to tell children about the naturalness, the beauty, the sanctity, of sex life and the evils connected with stumbling around in the dark.

To my mind there is nothing connected with village life more distinctive and significant than the acquaintance it gives with people. There are neighbors in the village. They are almost non-existent in the city unless it be in the tenement. There are cruel, selfish neighbors to be sure, but there are good neighbors also, and the important thing is that there are standards of decent conduct and public opinion tending powerfully to hold people up to the mark. Not only is it delightful to have people call you by your first name and know all about you, but it is a steadying influence not easy to overestimate.

One of the delights of the Bucksport visit was the gossip. We talked about people—old folks who had died, young folks who had moved away, summer visitors who had come back, and the year round residents.

A good part of the charm of an old town like Bucksport lies in the interest people take in one

and in the fact that the people are themselves interesting.

The same thing is true of my own Bucksport with an old Dutch name up in the state of New York.

Life in a village is not necessarily narrow. Life in a city is not necessarily broad.

Old John X lived three blocks only from the Congressional Library in Washington, but never saw it in his life. Back and forth like a shuttle he moved between his house and his desk.

Old Jake Y, up in Sharon, lived on his farm three miles from the village, but a better read man I never came across.

These village improvement societies, women's clubs, men's clubs, church organizations, library associations, park commissions, village papers—yes, political organizations also—do a great work in educating the inhabitants.

In the town meeting people came nearer to actually bearing political responsibilities than anywhere else under our form of government.

In Bucksport there are many unusually intelligent people. Some of them have traveled widely. Others have read deeply. One especially is an expert naturalist—up on both birds and flowers. "Did you hear the birds last night," she asked at dinner, "flying over in the dark? Never did I hear so many great flocks going south."

While life in all small towns is much alike, each one is distinctive, and it is an interesting study to get close enough to them to see in what the distinctiveness consists. The Middle West is not up state New York, and up state New York is not the hill country of Vermont, New Hampshire or Maine, and life in the hill country is not the same as life on the seaboard.

Bucksport really is on an estuary, almost down

to the head of the bay, and the sea helps give color to the town.

With the decline of the industries and the commerce which made Bucksport rich in the old days—fishing, shipbuilding, lumbering, canneries—there has developed steadily the new industry for which Maine has been famous so many years, caring for summer people.

Descendants of old families and new people attracted by the wonderful natural beauty of the region, have come in and built cottages and camps on Lake Alamoosic and Toddy Pond, a few miles away, and up and down the river on both sides. The motor brings most of these people into the village in a few minutes, and every day one sees them on the streets, in the stores or in the old homes of their kinsfolk. The younger ones create the lively social whirl of Bucksport in the summer time. The older ones contribute an atmosphere of deeper enjoyment as one sees them in the library, at church, on the hotel porch, or motoring home with a pair of country chickens and a package of spinach bouncing up and down on the back seat.

Beside the summer visitors there are the tourists who come by motor and stop for the night. There is no bridge across the Penobscot below Bangor, but for years foot passengers and vehicles have been carried across at Bucksport on scows. A powerful little motor boat noses a heavy scow across in a semicircle up or down the river depending on the tide, and carries as many as five heavy motor cars at a time. The bank of the river by the ferry is an interesting study in contrasts. By the old rotting wharves, alongside porches where old citizens sit peacefully smoking, there draw up these modern meteors of transportation bearing tags of every state in the Union, and patiently and impatiently wait for

A TYPICAL SCHOHARIE COUNTY VALLEY

their turn on the scows where oxen and horses and people have bucked the same currents for many years.

We had some restful walks during our week-end. Thanks to the good friend who knows birds and flowers so well, we walked up the shore of the river when the tide was out and saw dozens of water birds—gulls, tern, and whole flocks of the palmated plover and palmated sandpiper, neither of which we had seen before. They were running up and down the sand chasing the ebbing tide and getting "their meat from God."

As Brooke Herford once said: "The New Testament is right. Your Heavenly Father feedeth them. But the way he does it involves some valuable co-operation on their part."

Then we walked two miles north of the village to an old cemetery near a silvery little lake in the woods, to find the graves of some of the people we had known or known about. Here we left the smell of the sea and the sense of being on the coast, and immersed ourselves in interior Maine.

The bladder campion, the black-eyed Susan, butter and eggs, all kinds of golden-rod and other old-fashioned flowers were blooming there. We identified twenty-five kinds. And many a bank was covered with sensitive ferns.

One new thing to us was yarrow of a beautiful old rose tint. Perhaps some mineral in the soil colored it, but it is not uncommon around Bucksport.*

Another walk alone over the high fields east of the town I shall never forget, for it seemed as if some of the spirits of the early settlers were walking there too.

Saturday night into the dinner party arranged for us came the local Congregational minister, with

---

*A correspondent writes that it is found all over Maine.

an invitation to preach on the morrow that I could not honorably evade.

It was an honor to stand in his pulpit and to meet his people. It was a pleasure to see how the young Englishman and his wife are building a place for themselves in Bucksport. It was August, and Methodists and Congregationalists were worshiping together. The minister's wife sang the solo simply, unaffectedly, reverently, and it was a joy to hear her.

Part of the charm of Bucksport in these later days lies in the better feeling between the churches, and in united effort for the village to which all are so devotedly attached.

CHAPTER XXXVI

ON THE SOUTHWESTERN AND THE WOLVERINE

THE Southwestern Limited bore us swiftly westward on the last afternoon of summer. In five hours more autumn would be officially ushered in. There were yellow leaves on a few of the trees in the Wellesleys and the Newtons. The bushes showed the scarlet and the purple of maturing berries. The station platform at Wellesley was piled high with trunks from every state in the Union, showing that the college girls were back even though most of the birds had gone. There was autumn smoke at Framingham, where men were burning debris, autumn flowers and vegetables where the train permitted us glimpses of the gardens, and an autumn haze on far horizons.

A few miles east of Palmer in the big swamp we came up with a long row of trees which in the South I would have said were gums. They were too far away to identify, but every leaf on every tree for half a mile had turned dark red. In the Berkshires the maples too had begun to turn, and there were reds and scarlets down on the ground.

It is astonishing on a railway journey to note how beauty comes up to the very edge of the roadbed. In a long line of mammoth sunflowers it nods to us over the top of a high board fence. In rolling greensward it invites us out of our narrow Pullman cells to wander with it whither we will. From little ponds it sends us reflections of woods and sky. In tangled thickets it gives us beds of sensitive ferns already turning brown, and bits of scarlet in the

bushes. In golden-rod and purple aster it travels with us as long as daylight lets us see it, and in the sky, even from a train, it looks from depths of serene blue that fit all seasons alike.

In New England one always notices in autumn the tasseled maize, the golden pumpkin, the red and yellow apples, the poles of beans. One notices also the great boulders in many a hill pasture, and the dark pines which have been spared here and there and which set off the beauty of the deciduous trees and plants. On a sunny afternoon, if one can sit where he sees such things, a railway journey can be very pleasant. In the club car the poet, the dreamer, the naturalist, finds himself at home fully as much as the smoker, the card player and the man who wants something (harmless) to drink. There usually is plenty of room. One can sit up straight or sprawl, ride forward, backward or sideways, and even to some extent get up and move around.

My own choice seat is not in one of the chairs. It is in one of the seats fixed for card players at the front end, on the sunny side, back to the sun, curtain up, head almost against the window and feet anywhere and everywhere. There one can look and think, or think he is thinking, and have a bully good rest. If one is in a mood to write one can make a cozy little study of a card table with its alcove seats.

Back in the parlor car every seat is taken, curtains are pulled down, dowagers are snoozing, flappers are rouging, old gentlemen are just waking up very testy, and what one does is seen of all men. Blessed is the freedom and sunshine and fellowship and ginger ale and curling fragrance of Havana smoke (if there is not too much of it) in the club car.

The Connecticut is one of the rivers which one never crosses without thinking longingly of its upper reaches and the lovely country from which it comes.

It is broad and majestic at Springfield, and the bridges and the tower of the Civic Center give it dignity. We could not follow the big Connecticut, but there was full compensation in following the Westfield, which flows into the Connecticut at Springfield.

Away to the west it led us over a wide, rich plain, now curving away toward the sunset, all lighted up with silver and gold, then coming back so still and dark one could not see even reflections of the trees. On its biggest bends it often showed us what it had done in generations past, for it enclosed alluvial fields as rich and level as the fields along the Nile. When we reached the Berkshires and it seemed were barred, the Westfield showed us the way into the mountain valleys and passes. Here we no longer could take a straight course, but curved more frequently with the river, climbing up and up as darkness came on. The river now was running over rocks, breaking into ripples, leaping little falls, foaming around boulders, getting smaller and smaller, preparing to say good-night. In the Berkshires we never get above the tree line. At the very top, after miles of wild, rocky, wooded country, we come again to cultivated fields. They are not the Rockies, but they are themselves, worthy in their own right to be studied, blessed hill comrades to those who know enough to seek the honor of their acquaintance.

In the morning we were flying across Ontario, Canada, for I had left the Southwestern in Albany, used up an hour in errands and telephoning, and caught the New England Wolverine for Chicago.

It was a cold morning and I could see my breath. The fields were covered with white frost. They were far different fields—stretching away perfectly level for miles. The sunrise, sending rosy tints into the northeast where I could see them, seemed farther

away. There were more horses and cows grazing. The farming seemed on a vastly bigger scale. Yet it was not like the western plains, for the farm-houses were closer together, there were trees and bushes along fences and noble single trees here and there in fields, and patches of woodland. East of Chicago one has hardly begun to go west. There was tobacco too, and buckwheat, and plenty of standing corn, and nothing seemed frozen yet, although it was September 24. We approached a small river, and from a beautiful clear morning where one could see for miles, we plunged into a fog bank so thick we could not see the water. A moment we roared through it and again we had the glad light of a perfect day. But over every stream, and on every water hole and pond, the mist hung thick.

The women were out early working in the tobacco. The men were busy already with fall plowing. They are good farmers in Ontario, and they have rich lands and the machinery they need to help them. One would need a portable derrick in order to move one of their big rollers across some of the New England fields I had seen the night before. But on the broad rich flats of the Connecticut these farmers and their modern machinery would find themselves at home, and perhaps surprised and delighted.

It is a pity that so many persons in the United States think of Canada almost exclusively in terms of wet and dry—a Sodom and Gomorrah of wickedness because it does not keep complete prohibition, a Beulah land of delight because one can get a drink when he wants it. But liquor means comparatively little in the young life of Canada. They have a few important things like bumper crops of wheat and they do look after their business.

A little train, dinky and cheap in comparison with our vestibuled splendor, came puffing jauntily up

as we slowed down, making a brave appearance, for the rising sun lighted up the smoke and steam trailing behind. It had a little old-fashioned engine with large smoke-stack and commonplace coaches, but it left a rosy smoke screen behind and it came up "trailing clouds of glory." I read on the engine a name that belongs to all this region and to all of our own "Northwest Territory," "Pere Marquette."

The Pere Marquette Railway runs from Chicago to Buffalo, and to other terminals in the Middle West. The Father Marquette influence runs from France to Quebec, over the Great Lakes, down the Wisconsin, Illinois, Mississippi, and Kankaskia Rivers, all through the states of Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan, and all the way from 1666 to 1927.

Even the most bitter opponent of the Catholic Church must pause to pay tribute to the nobility of this man who laid down his life to spread the gospel of love among the savage Indians of the West.

Usually, going to Chicago or through Chicago to the Northwest or the coast, one thinks only of the big city. There is quite enough of it to engross one's attention. One hardly realizes he is in any state except the state of Chicago.

But when one is going to a state convention, it matters not whether it be a convention of churches, politicians, or corn growers, one thinks in terms of the whole state.

Suddenly I realized that I was not simply to cut across a corner of Illinois, or cross it, but to travel a good part of the length of it from Lake Michigan down to the Ohio. At last I was going down into Egypt.

When the territory of Illinois was set off from the territory of Indiana in 1809, a change was made in the boundaries at the last moment to give the territory an outlet on Lake Michigan. The argu-

ment was that all the main waterways ran to the south into the Ohio or into the Mississippi direct. The travel, communication, trade, would all be with the South and the state would become "Southern." To give an equal chance for Northern influence to make itself felt a waterway was furnished by the Great Lakes. A little tail was hitched on to the dog and the tail now almost wags the dog. And these waterways seem to be coming back. In spite of the promise or threat of the airplane and dirigible, in spite of the development in rail transportation, men are turning again to the routes they first used. The commanding influence of Herbert Hoover is back of development of our waterways, for he sees that they are needed not as competitors but as adjuncts to the railways.

Illinois has the Illinois River, formed by a junction of the Kankakee and Des Plaines Rivers—the most important river in the state unless we count the Chicago River. But the Mississippi and the Ohio and the Wabash all run along the borders of Illinois and drain the state, and it was to the banks of the Wabash we were headed.

If ever the people of Illinois get self-centered or provincial all they need to do to correct it is to remember that practically everything they have has been brought there from somewhere else. The enormous fertility of their soil—and Illinois is one of the garden spots of creation—is due to the glacial drifts ten to 200 feet deep, slowly and patiently carried there ages ago and laid over their yellow clay. Now on top of the drift time has made a black loam ten or fifteen feet deep. No wonder every kind of flower and plant and tree which can live in the North Temperate Zone lives there. No wonder that flocks and herds of all kinds of wild creatures roamed these rich plains and valleys in the old days. And down

underneath dusky diamonds can be dug—second only in value to the coal of Pennsylvania. They don't shine as brightly, but they burn more brightly. I won't attempt to tell what a good citizen told me about the rank of Illinois among the states—"way up in hay, corn, wheat, potatoes, oats, barley, sugar beets," "third in population," "a leader in industries."

We can discount the claims and get down to the facts, and the facts will be surprising enough. There was good reason for the rush of people a hundred years ago to take up the rich bottom lands of the state. One Thomas Lincoln heard the stories, and made his way up out of Kentucky to Indiana and then to the Sangamon Bottom in Illinois, and his lanky boy who could split rails and dream dreams was heard from.

Illinois had her own problem of unity. Once the state was practically all Southern, but something in the soil or climate or pioneer conditions stripped Southern partisanship from most of its people. Later it was both Northern and Southern in population and sympathy. Eventually they worked out unity. Stephen A. Douglas deserves some credit too for the telegrams he sent over the state in '61, "My friends must all support Lincoln."

To the editor of a religious journal, of course, the universities and professional schools and art galleries and laboratories and churches stand up with the factories and mines and farms and lines of transportation and trade in interest. Early in the story these things begin to appear. The little academies grew into colleges and the colleges into Chicago University, Northwestern, the State University, and forty or fifty others.

"Old Hutch" made his millions. Charles Hutchinson made other millions, and put his influence back of parks, art galleries, schools and churches.

Smaller colleges closer to the people loyally did their part in giving the boys and girls a chance. For a time there were too many of them. We were saying, "Close up the duplicating colleges." To-day we are looking for more room. There is a place for colleges like Lombard and they should be loyally backed.

There is another story connected with the rush of the people to these prairies of especial interest to me. It is the story of the early Universalist preachers who fought the battle for a rational theology and tremendously modified old views.

CHAPTER XXXVII

DOWN IN EGYPT

"WHERE is Egypt?" asked Dr. Brigham of the old conductor, as our little motor train screeched its way southward in Illinois on the tracks of the "Big Four." "Over just beyond," squeaked the gray and wizened old fellow, when he had made out what was meant. "You'll never find Egypt," he went on. "Folks everywhere will tell you, 'Egypt isn't here. It's over in the next county.'"

We asked Dr. John S. Cook, who boarded the train at Marshall, "Why do people call southern Illinois Egypt?" "I'll tell you," he answered at once. "Many years ago there was a great scarcity of corn in central Illinois and a big crop in southern Illinois. People went down there to buy corn, and as Cairo was there they got to joking about 'going down into Egypt to buy corn,' as Joseph's brethren did in the Bible story."

Though I am writing about "Down in Egypt," of course I have not been there. It was "just beyond."

Illinois is 374 miles long and we went south only 200 miles, but Cairo on the Mississippi was 188 miles farther, although part of that distance was west rather than south. Two hundred miles south in Illinois, however, is enough to effect a great change in climate, in people, in customs. One gets into the sphere of Southern influence. One finds people whose ancestors came from Georgia, the Carolinas and Kentucky, instead of New England and New York. One would go wrong, however, who jumped to the conclusion that it was the South.

It is not the South, nor the West. It is itself—"Egypt," southern Illinois.

Our destination was an old river town on the Wabash, "Hutsonville." The Wabash is a "little river" only 550 miles long, a mere nothing in these great states of the Middle West. It comes out of Ohio, goes off northward through Indiana, and coming back to the south for 120 miles it forms the boundary between Indiana and Illinois. One song put the Wabash River valley deep into the subconsciousness of the American people. The chorus was:

"Oh the moonlight's fair to-night along the Wabash;
From the fields there comes the breath of new mown hay;
Through the sycamores the candle light is gleaming;
On the banks of the Wabash far away."

Call them melodramatic or sentimental if you choose, the songs like "Carry Me Back to Ole Virginny," "My Old Kentucky Home," "Suwanee River" and "The Banks of the Wabash," which bring visions of the old home and home folks, the scenes and characters associated with childhood, take fast hold on the imagination of a home-loving people.

Many years ago the steamboats ran up and down the Wabash River. In those days Hutsonville was an important river landing on the Illinois side.

How old it is I do not know. One old citizen cutting twelve-foot corn stalks in his garden, who paused to talk to me, said that the first settler was "a man named Hutson."

The Rev. Thomas Chapman, the local Universalist pastor, at the men's luncheon in Robinson, the county seat, described his life in the Carolinas with old Universalist families—Raines, Newlin, and others. "And," said he, "when I reached Hutsonville I found descendants of those families working by my side in the church here."

A Chicago lady interested in history called my attention to the fact that Hutsonville is not far from the latitude of Vincennes, Indiana, and that George Rogers Clark undoubtedly passed near here in his marching and countermarching to wrest Illinois from the grip of the British and their Indian allies.

Another citizen said that Abraham Lincoln came to Hutsonville as a young man of twenty-one, traveling with his father in 1830 from Indiana to the new home west of Decatur, Illinois.

To-day Hutsonville has a population of only 700 or 800 people. Coming from the railroad station into the village or crossing on the flat-boat from the Indiana side and climbing the high banks, one would find himself on a main street like ten thousand other main streets, and in a village of frame houses, many of which are a story and a half high. None of them, however, are "on stilts" with hogs and chickens running underneath. Most of them have gardens and flower beds—dahlias, zinnias, cockscomb, hollyhocks—in full flower. And one soon sees houses and other structures which show that a few people at least can put their hands deep in their pockets when it comes to building—here a fine two-story brick high school, there a remarkably neat and commodious Universalist church of brick and stone, a Baptist church and a Methodist church. On the outskirts also one can find large and beautiful homes. The Dixie Highway passes north and south some two miles west of the town, but a hard road "feeder" has been built by the state as a connection for Hutsonville. And it is in the midst of a good farming country. The glacial drift which underlies so much of Illinois and on which is superimposed that ten or twelve-foot layer of black muck which makes Illinois famous, stops about thirty-five miles north of Hutsonville, a keen young college man told me, where one can still recognize

signs of the old terminal moraine. "Our land," said he, "is not so rich except the bottom land in the river valley, but our land, even inland, measures up pretty well."

The scenery is in contrast to that of the broken hill country of New England, but has a beauty of its own. It is the beauty of the wide rolling prairie, but a prairie thickly settled. One can not "travel for hours without seeing a habitation"—one can hardly get out of sight of one. Illinois is a state rich enough to support an empire, and rapidly is becoming one. One often crosses railroads. One finds towns set close together. And through the rich prairie country there run the rivers here as always closely tied up with the history—the Mississippi, the Ohio, and the Wabash on the borders, the Illinois, the Kankakee, the Des Plaines, the Sangamon, Fox, Kankaskia and others in the interior—all flowing south or southwest. I nearly missed my train in Chicago, as I was concentrated on a wondrous display in the Loop District showing the glories and beauties of the Fox River Valley.

Doubtless one can find little towns of 700 or 800 people down in Egypt or toward Egypt where conditions are crude. One "reckons without his host," however, if he jumps to the conclusion that life anywhere in the country districts has to be crude. We went to Hutsonville to attend a State Convention of Universalists. The local people entertained us in their homes. Ten or a dozen were taken care of in the big brick house of the planter-banker next door to where I stayed, and three of us—the state president, Mr. Tilney, Mrs. Tilney and I—were in the little house adjoining where his son is living until his own new house can be built. This son superintends his father's "little farm," and one of the church people told me that in "the little farm," or farms, there are

just 4,000 acres of land. The young superintendent is a graduate of Stanford University, California, his wife, a Virginian, is a graduate of the University of Michigan, as attractive and interesting a young couple as one could find anywhere—full of the joy of life, of faith in life, interested in books, in people, looking forward to the time when they can "go to Europe again and really see it," and with a community spirit which wants to make life richer for everybody. Every visiting Universalist had the same story to tell of genuine beautiful hospitality.

The daughter of the big house, watching out for the strangers at the church, and the others associated with her, never saw a gap but that in the quietest, easiest way possible they filled it.

Put now a State Convention of Universalists for the first time in its history into such an environment and it is bound to have a life, a color, that is distinctive. For consider the factors: the city ministers and laymen and laywomen of Chicago, delegates from thriving cities like Oak Park, Peoria, Joliet, Urbana, Hoopeston, the preachers of a pioneer missionary type from Beecher City, Bingham, Rose Hill, young fellows from the universities starting work in the smaller towns, the delegates of the Y. P. C. U., the delegates of the W. U. M. A., the state officers and official board—all set down in Hutsonville to worship, to work, to listen, with the scores of people from the region who drove in to the meetings. Consider also what Charles Musgrave said at the men's luncheon: "A generation ago, one pointed his finger at a man if he was a Universalist. Last night the Baptist ladies came into our church, took our dishes and silver and cook stove and served a thirty-five cent dinner for us you all are talking about yet—doing it in the finest, friendliest spirit of Christian co-operation. To-night the Methodist ladies are having us over there

in their large basement and in the same spirit putting on a real banquet for $1.50."

Consider also that down here toward Egypt, the Convention was offered the hospitality of the "Country Club" and the beautiful golf course at Robinson through the courtesy of the Hutsonville Universalists who are members.

Seldom do we hold a church convention in one of the smaller towns or country districts that we do not find the convention standing out afterward in our memories clear cut, distinctive, with a texture and a color all its own. So it was with this Hutsonville Convention, and he who bears this testimony knows conventions, both city and country, and more than once on his short earthly pilgrimage has found them an unutterable weariness to the flesh.

Chapman helped give the Convention its individuality, faithful, friendly, devoted Chapman, a true host, a convert, when a lad, of Father Clayton in the South, with a record of service in the Carolinas, Georgia, Missouri and other states, now happily placed in the best church and among some of the truest people he ever has served.

Cook helped give it color—older in years than Chapman, but his junior in the ministry. In his father's home in England, young Cook used to hear the more liberal preachers of the English Church discuss theology, and his mind was opened and freed. When he came to Beecher City, Illinois, as a young man, he could not stand the harsh dogmas proclaimed in the churches and did not join them. Then one day as he was teaching school a stranger knocked at the door and asked permission to preach in the schoolhouse that night. The school committee was willing if the teacher was willing, and Cook gave his consent. A friend induced him to attend the meeting, and there he heard something different which appealed

to him—the love of God for all His children. He never learned the name of the itinerant, he never saw him again, but he found out that he was a Universalist, and when a Universalist church was organized young Cook was ready to go in. Generally preaching in the smaller places, after working hard on his little farm to make the crops needed to eke out his income, sometimes serving as State Superintendent, and in journeyings often for the cause, he has lived his life. He and Chapman broke the bread and gave us the cup in the communion service. It was a peculiarly affecting, uplifting service—one which the present writer will never forget. There is no use attempting to tell what was said. The deep impression was not in what was said. It was in the little glimpse we had into life, life full of toil and hardship, of loss and privation, but illumined and blessed by comradeship, and by a mighty faith in the reality of the Everlasting Arms.

Both Chapman and Cook love the country and country people, and Cook has a fine knowledge of natural history.

It was the first Universalist State Convention for the Rev. M. M. Hicks of Bingham, pastor for forty-seven years of the church established by his great uncle, the Rev. Temple Hicks, who came up ninety years ago from Tennessee and held services under a hickory tree—the church of Baptists which voted itself Universalist with the loss of only two members, and is known as "Little Hickory." Mr. Hicks is the lawyer, the preacher, the squire of the community. He draws the wills, he settles the disputes, he "preaches the funerals," he holds religious meetings, and he is loved and respected by the people of the country round about for miles.

I put myself by him at dinner the first night to get acquainted, for he is so modest that strangers have to follow him up if they want to know him. It

pleased the Convention to have him there and he was warmly cheered when he was called up for a speech at the men's lunch. He acquitted himself so as to deepen our respect.

Probably everybody at the Convention would agree with me that the outstanding event was the address of the Rev. Dwight Bradley of Webster City, a suburb of St. Louis, on Tuesday night. Not once in ten years do we get anything so luminous, incisive, exalted, at a State Convention, or even a General Convention. He talked an hour—not skimming over the surface either—and he held that mixed audience of city folk and country folk, ministers and laymen, university men and non-university men, in an astonishing way. And he just loved to do it. He was not straining himself. He was simply talking on tolerance in a way which sent the mind into the remotest corners of the earth and the darkest corners of the heart. "That man," said my host, "is one of the few really tolerant men on earth. He is a hundred years ahead of most of us." Until he appeared he was known as "the son of the Rev. Dan Bradley." From now on the Rev. Dan to some of us who have never seen him I fear will be the father of the Rev. Dwight.

It was good to see him resting after the meeting in the grateful darkness of the big porch of the brick "farmhouse," with the friendly occupants of the ten guest chambers gathered around him, and the host and hostess and the son and daughter doing the honors, and people dropping in from the other houses, and the hour of rest almost at hand.

There was a real pang involved when we came to get our bags and say good-night and good-by. Only yesterday had we come. To-morrow we would be hundreds of miles away. But in the few hours a procession of people had marched through our minds, and some of them had left treasure there.

Thus is it always in our pilgrimage if we are willing. There is friendliness waiting for us in every hamlet, in almost every home.

The little house by the side of the road is a friendly house—unless we sit there in the scorner's seat.

And the road itself, as David Grayson reminds us, and as we have proved a thousand times, is a friendly road. Thank God for it.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

A JOURNEY TO NORTH CAROLINA

THE day we left Boston (April 20) the thermometer reached 89 degrees, shattering all records for hot weather in April. But the evening papers had much to say about blizzards on the same parallel of latitude out in the far West. New England was burning up with a prolonged drought, but the torrential rains and cloud-bursts in the Mississippi Valley had broken river levees and taken a toll of over 100 lives. Every day there is something to make us realize that it is a country of great distances and wide variations in climate.

I had to spend half a day in New York and kill two birds with one railroad fare, and as it had been a hot, sticky day in the office, I suddenly decided to go by boat. In the height of the season it is not advisable to make such a decision late in the day, for the boats are crowded. In April, however, one is apt to get something even at the last moment.

We do not find references in literature to the kindness of ticket sellers on railroad and steamboat lines, but my experience is that, if a person will only meet these men half way, there is no end to the trouble they will take to satisfy the customer. In Boston, my dealings are limited almost exclusively to the men at the Back Bay Station of the New Haven and the Trinity Place Station of the B. & A., and I know them to be patient, honest, efficient and kind. To be sure they are human and are often sorely tried. If they do not go out of their way to render special service to the man who insults and bullies them, if they give whatever shade of advantage there may be

to the man who treats them as a human being, is that any more than is to be expected? Be all this as it may, two men worked hard to find me an outside stateroom on the Fall River Line while I hustled home to pack my bag, and the room was waiting for me on the boat.

As the boat turned southward toward Newport, I saw a beautiful reflection in the water—a long silvery beam not as wide or as bright as that made by the moon, but very marked, and looking up I saw Venus shining almost as if she thought she were "the lesser light to rule the night." At Rocky Mount, almost as brilliant off in the west, Jupiter was shining with a clear and steady light just before dawn.

The afternoon run to Washington was over the B. & O. This company has put into operation on two of the through trains to the West a type of coach new to me, with wide seats divided like the front seat of an automobile, beautifully upholstered, and so comfortable that the Pullman Company may protest against this free competition. The Pullman Company itself seems to be "painting the lily," for it has just started between New York and Washington a stateroom sleeping car made up of individual rooms equipped with every conceivable device for comfort. For my part, in such surroundings I should miss the good old upper berth, the fatherly old porter watching over his children, and the variegated assortment of snores in every key. But my fellow passengers are clamoring for these rooms, and they are sold out every night.

It is not far from Washington to North Carolina. I left at 9.40 p. m. and at 4 a. m. I was called to be ready to get out at 4.25.

Rocky Mount is a railroad center with 22,000 people, lying northeast of Raleigh, the Capital, and on the low, level coastal plain. It is named on the

same principle as is Pink Hill, which is neither pink nor a hill, and Red Hill and Rose Hill. Rocky Mount is neither "rocky" nor a "mount."

Leaving my bag with a sleepy porter at the hotel about 4.30 a. m. I sallied out into the lovely night—the moon past the full, not long up above the eastern horizon. In an all-night lunch room I found hot coffee and cheer and companionship. When I finished and went out again at 4.45 that trembling, misty change had come to the night which indicates the approach of day. There was a chance for a good walk and a glorious sunrise. Instinctively I got on the route I had followed years before out to Mrs. Winstead's plantation—up the Main Street and southwest along Sunset Avenue. It was sunrise avenue before I got back—beautiful, detached homes big and small, bungalows and mansions lighted up with the first beams of day. The trees seemed no farther out than in Washington, but the rosebushes—red, pink and yellow—were in full bloom. At the Tar River, a mile or so from town, I stopped and watched the intake of the water works, for the town gets its drinking water from the "Tar" and filters it. Then, leaving the boulevard, I swung back to town over an old narrow guage railroad used to bring out logs from a point eighteen or twenty miles up in the country. There were pine woods and negro cabins along this route, with mocking-birds singing gloriously on telegraph poles and pig-pens, cat-birds curiously chasing me along to see what I proposed to do, a brown thrasher trying to keep out of sight, and some warblers up in the tops of tall long-leafed white pines and tall maples. There were also bird calls and songs I did not know.

Arriving so early in the morning entirely unannounced, I was able to settle myself at the hotel and escape some of the lavish Southern hospitality.

This may sound ungracious, but when one reads the long news story in this issue about Rocky Mount one may realize that I had to be free to eat, sleep and write when I would.

One thing I proposed to do was to walk out to Mrs. Winstead's plantation, about two miles from town. After a long noontime siesta, I started. Passing the water works again, I made inquiry at a gasoline filling station, and found that I could go by the boulevard or by a wood road. The latter was all that it sounds like—meandering past cotton fields, near negro cabins, and through woods which had been partly cut off and had grown up again. Over at one of the cabins I disposed of two bananas in my pocket, which I had brought along as an emergency ration. One needs no such things in the Carolinas. Two little piccaninnies came at my call and took them—at first almost overcome with wonder and then with bliss.

There were masses of red and white clover in full bloom, tangles of red honeysuckle, wild pink and white azalea, the white blossoms of the wild blackberry and millions of bluets. On the north side of the woods, the oak leaves had just started to come out and were a combination of exquisite gray and pink. Off in the woods there were the dogwoods in full bloom, and yellow jasmine climbing the trunks of the pines. A cardinal came and sang for me while I sat down near a pitch pine stump. No, not on the stump. I know too much for that, but I ran my finger over it and tasted the resin. There is no wilder flavor in the woods, none more typical of North Carolina and of the "Tar Heels." It was too early for another citizen of North Carolina to be out—Mr. Chigger. About him the president of the Universalist State Convention, Mr. Williams, recited a poem well worth printing if we only had the text.

The Winstead plantation is one of the few old

places which has not been divided up. The big old-fashioned white house, to which rooms have been "added on" three times, stands in the center. Back of it there are the cow stables, the mule stables, the sheep house, paddocks around them and lanes to the pastures, and many other buildings. The hogs had a beautiful little grove to themselves. Three or four different varieties of pure-bred chickens had their separate sheds and yards—off on one side the Rhode Island Reds, on another the white Wyandottes and still farther the beautiful barred Plymouth Rocks, which hold their own bravely against all the newer breeds. One pen with several hundred young "Rocks" crowding up to be fed was about as beautiful a sight as I've seen in some time. Forty of them were sacrificed for our banquet at the church, and they maintained the highest traditions of their kind for tenderness and juiciness.

In the house itself were more rooms than I can name—front rooms and hall and side rooms with big fireplaces, the office and bedroom of the mistress with another fireplace, winter dining-room, summer dining-room, creamery with stone jars full of thick cream, kitchen, vegetable kitchen, and another place where stood an enormous tub in which lay a whole hog (a pure bred Hampshire) soaking in cold salt water in preparation for the barbecue. All that night the expert colored man had him cooking out doors. "Cook him slow," he said, "so he won't burn and be done all through." That is what he was when the big Winstead truck carried him to the church on Sunday for the barbecue feast.

There was a tea out at this old place Saturday afternoon for all the people who had come to the dedication. Cheerful fires were snapping in every room and it was cool enough to enjoy them. Everybody was foot free to wander over the house or over

the plantation, take tea in the parlor or watch the overseer drive in the mules. Then too there was syllabub, made by Mrs. King from Washington, out of what I know not. All I can say is that it was white and soft, a cross between ambrosia and nectar, and with a delicious flavor I could not identify but which seemed to carry one back along the pathway of the years to days gone forever. There was the excitement of a fire—apparently in one of the cabins, but in reality in the brush near by—and the rush of the plantation fire departments, negroes with shovels and hoes running from all sides. There was the meeting of Universalists from North and South, happy conversations, fine fellowship. Best of all was the chance to see the hostess on her own broad acres, doing the honors in her own great hall, leaning a little more heavily than we liked to see on her stout cane, but still in command.

Mr. Hamner Winstead called up his overseer for us to see. He was a fine gray-haired negro. "He knows more about the place than I do myself," said Mr. Winstead. His folks before him were slaves in the family, and this man prefers to live his life with those who know and appreciate his sterling worth.

One of the most beautiful holly trees I have ever seen stands in the front yard of this fine old place. Mrs. Winstead told us that when she came here as a bride the men were clearing up the yard. Alongside of a huge pine stump was the holly shoot and they started to tear it out to get rid of the stump. At her urgent request they left both stump and holly. In the process of time the stump disappeared and the holly became a magnificent specimen of its kind.

There is a touching family loyalty among these Southerners. From far and near came the kin for the dedication of a church. Every grandchild of Mrs. Winstead was there, many of the nephews and nieces,

all of her sisters. The grandchildren might have strayed off into the Episcopal fold in this community or that, but they would not fail the grandmother when her church came to be dedicated.

Nineteen years ago I went down to the old plantation to officiate at the wedding of one of the daughters. Back she came from her home far away in the western part of the state, to give her musical talent and education for the great event.

I did not stay at Mrs. Winstead's house, but the Northern delegates who did are still talking about the meals. Breakfast, for example, gave them fruit, cereal, not jugs but big pitchers of cream, and coffee. After this Mrs. Winstead gave the order: "Now bring on the breakfast." There were great platters of ham and gravy, other platters of eggs, poached or fried, hominy grits, spoon bread, hot rolls and stacks of griddle cakes and syrup.

Sunday night when we packed up to go away, we found that some of us had reservations on a sleeper which was coming up from Wilmington and others on a sleeper coming up from Newbern, both getting in at 11.25 and then waiting to be picked by Number 82, the Palmetto Limited from Florida, at 12.25. When we reached the station we were told that the Wilmington train had gone into the ditch down the line and that the Newbern sleeper was blocked by it. One of the Winstead "in-laws," however, was head mechanic in the big shops. He had the chief train dispatcher call up the Palmetto Limited down the line, ascertain in just which section there was room for us, and they were ready for us when the train came in.

That turning out at midnight to see the party off after having entertained them for three full days was the keystone to the arch of hospitality and kindness. There is a little special texture and color to the Universalism of North Carolina.

CHAPTER XXXIX

FERRY BEACH AND THE GREAT WIDE SEA

INLANDER by birth and breeding, devoted first of all to the hills, I am glad I am a Universalist because my faith makes me rejoice in the other aspects of nature. To be universalist it is not enough to hold some theory about the future. One must realize that all things are ours now, "whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas," whether prairies, rocky mountains, the green hills, or the great and wide sea. All have their distinct contribution, and yet all speak in unison their great Creator's praise.

To evolutionists the seashore brings an especial thrill because they realize that at this meeting place of land and water probably life on earth began. For ages inconceivable to us, millions and millions of years after the oceans had settled down into their beds, the continents still were in the throes of being born. Only the most vivid imagination can picture the terrific explosions which attended the upheaval of the mountains, or the time involved in wearing them down bit by bit, until they again reached the level of the sea. And all this over and over again.

Between the raging sea and the still more raging shore, on little pools more or less protected, there came at last the magic scum which had in it such possibilities for the earth. It would be more understandable and it would appear more divine if we had some other word for it than scum. The seashore is older far than any other place that we visit which is associated with the progress of our race. Every bit of seashore is related intimately to every one of us. No one can tell how long ago life began on earth. No

one can say in what way it originated. Geoffrey Parsons in his "Stream of History" begins his picture after the earth had cooled somewhat and taken its present form. He then compresses all the time since then, five hundred million or a billion years, into five days of twenty-four hours each. We get some conception of the ages and ages that have elapsed when he says that, putting history on this scale, "the whole story of historic man from Ancient Egypt to the Great War passes in the last twenty-three seconds of this fifth day."

It is the second day of a hundred million years or so that moves us so profoundly at the seashore: "Slowly in the morning the smoke and flame begin to abate. The clouds lift. The lands that stand forth to view are still bleak rock and barren sand. But somewhere life is beginning, perhaps in the inland pools, perhaps along the edge of the warm sea, a gray jelly, floating where the tides will, an inconspicuous scum. No onlooker would notice it alongside the great mountain ranges that are folded aloft by the shrinking shell of the earth. Yet it has the power of growth and development and it is destined to be mightier than all the hills."

I am fond of quoting Swinburne's lines:

> O mother sea, O fostress,
> What new strand, what new delight
> Of waters may this be.

The kinship is there. We are related to the sea. All life came out of it. And the more highly organized or sensitive we are the more we feel the pull or call of the sea, though we may have grown up far away from it. Some of us, swimming in the sea, immersed in the tide which surrounds the globe, have a clearer vision of our connection with the universe than we get anywhere else in the world. We do not easily

find words to express it, but something elemental is stirred within us when we immerse ourselves in the tide which bore our remote ancestors and the ancestors of all our little brothers and sisters, the trees, the plants, the flowers and the animals of this globe.

An infinitesimal fraction of a second, measured on Parsons' scale for geologic time, I spent recently at Ferry Beach, Me. It was long enough, however, to make me realize again how much I have come to love the sea.

Ferry Beach is on that stretch of Maine coast which lies between York Harbor and Old Orchard—almost at Old Orchard. It is ninety-six miles from Boston and eighteen miles southwest of Portland. Twenty-seven years ago a Universalist missionary, Quillen Hamilton Shinn, picked on this spot as a suitable place to hold Universalist summer meetings.

Dr. Shinn had started his meetings at the Weirs, N. H., in 1882, and hundreds attended them. After fourteen or fifteen years, a denomination of Christians which controlled the place, not as friendly then as now, showed that it was unwilling to have Universalists go on there, and Dr. Shinn tried Saratoga, N. Y. This however was a makeshift. Dr. Shinn loved the great open spaces. He wanted to be close to nature. With delight he discovered Ferry Beach, and got permission of a railroad company which owned the grounds to have meetings there in the summer of 1901. Year by year the meetings grew in interest and significance, and a permanent association was formed in 1906 to take charge. When some sense of permanence had been given to the undertaking for which he had worked so hard, it seemed as if Dr. Shinn could say: "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace." At any rate that was the last time that he was at Ferry Beach. In the summer of 1907 he was seriously ill at his home in West Virginia, and just after the

meetings ended he passed on. His name is the great name to conjure with still at Ferry Beach, although he has been dead twenty-one years. His spirit pervades the place. It is a beautiful thing to have his wife and stalwart sons go back there year after year.

Always impulsive, courageous, quick moving, when he made up his mind that he wanted Ferry Beach, Dr. Shinn bought it out of his own pocket, putting up his life insurance as security. Every dollar was soon paid back. The Association has gone on raising money, putting up buildings and making improvements.

It was not only the ocean which drew Dr. Shinn to Ferry Beach, it was the grove. There are twenty-five acres of beautiful forest, a few deciduous trees, but most of them white pines and hemlocks. Some one has called the white pine "the most important tree economically that the American continent has produced." Also it is one of the most beautiful. These white pines at Ferry Beach are tall and straight, and free from limbs to a considerable height. Where they are in possession they eliminate the underbrush, and year by year they lay a deep rug of fine needles. One of the walks is called Cathedral Walk.

Under the pines, a little pavilion has been erected, in front of which there are seats enough to accommodate two hundred or more people. Equipped with pulpit and portable organ, banked with ferns, guarded by the great trees, it is an ideal place for a religious service. The Sunday that I was there, Dr. Frank D. Adams preached a noble sermon. Mrs. Galer conducted the service with a reverence and beauty which made it an almost perfect out-door service. There was enough of a breeze to be heard in the tree-tops. There were great flecks and patches of beautiful sunlight coming through the branches, lighting up the ferns and pine needles, or falling here and there on

the worshipers. There were open spaces between the trees through which now and then one could see the illimitable sky. After I tried to preach in the afternoon, I was more conscious than I had ever been of the far greater eloquence of the place itself; the spirit of jazz and pep and whoop-her-up shrivels in such a setting. Something deep down is stirred.

On a Friday night I started for Ferry Beach, on the 5 p. m. train. At Dover the rain met us. It seemed as if the flood gates were opened. It was hard on the thousands struggling along the roads in motors, many of them trying to find their way amid strange surroundings, but it was delicious to settle back and hear the beating storm, feel the steady pull of the mighty power that was cutting down the miles for us with no effort on our part, and trustfully fall asleep. In the diner an old Bostonian sitting opposite, voiced his loyalty to the "Hub" most eloquently and entertainingly. At Old Orchard, a fine young fellow, a senior at the Massachusetts School of Agriculture, who is earning his way through college by driving a taxi during vacations, took me in charge and quickly carried me out of the town four miles down the coast to Ferry Beach. There my dozing ended. Things began to happen. In the next forty-eight hours I prayed, I preached, I tramped, acted as judge at a fancy dress party, and made my debut on the stage as the hero proposing to a tall beautiful girl (and with only forty-five minutes in which to learn my lines). But I had with me in this fix a professor from Syracuse University, a clean-cut young business man of Boston, and the aforesaid "t. b. g.," and the Madame was not there. The audience cheered wildly, but whether it was because of our histrionic ability, or because they were glad to see the irate father boot both the "fixer" and me off the stage, I never discovered.

Saturday was a day of storm. Shower followed shower in quick succession, and fog and mist were so thick that Old Orchard and all the headlands along the coast were hidden.

It was so thick when I went out in the morning that I could not see the water. The other houses were ghostly shadows in the mist. Everything was dripping and disagreeable. Then up piped a little seaside sparrow singing, not as Percy who wrote "Overtones" heard a bird sing, "alone among dead trees," but on a bit of beach grass in a dense fog. In that trill in the semi-darkness of the early morning was the voice of God, even if it were nothing but the immutable workings of natural law.

About noon I took a run in the grove with Bruce of North Attleboro, a friendly Airedale dog. Then we made a dash for the beach, intending to come back immediately, but it got into our blood. No matter how stormy, one can walk comfortably on pine needles or on hard sand. The storm had imprisoned us, but we were now out of prison. Ahead of us lay the world. There was nothing to prevent our starting for Machias, Maine, or Miami, Florida. We started for Miami, walking and running at the very edge of the waves. Ahead of us soon loomed up a breakwater and we found we were at the mouth of the Saco River, not far from Biddeford and Saco. There was a little camp called Camp Ellis near by, used now mainly by French Canadians. Here various belligerent cats came out to meet Bruce, walking toward him sideways with fire in their eyes and menace in their tails. We speedily put out toward the open ocean along the leeward side of the breakwater, near the jagged granite blocks which the tide covers every few hours and on which were innumerable lovely crustaceans and marine growths. Around the breakwater there were many gulls, herring gulls, laughing

OFF TOWARD PINE MOUNTAIN

From the back-yard at the farm

gulls and the lovely Bonaparte gulls, and a hundred or more sandpipers, semi-palmated plovers and killdeer. The Bonaparte gulls objected to Bruce and swooped at him again and again, but he never snarled once, but gaily dashed into the waves and out, and up and down the beach, barking at the sandpipers. We followed the breakwater until the rising tide stopped us. Then the rain came down and we made for the settlement. We had missed our dinner and were hungry, and I bought some crackers. But Bruce would not eat them. Perhaps the cats had taken away his appetite. Going home, however, when I threw the crackers one by one into the surf, and the Bonaparte gulls made as if they would seize them, Bruce dashed in and retrieved them and ate them hungrily on the beach.

In the lobby of the Hotel Quillen, unless the day is very hot, there is an open fire. In front of this fireplace one gets the essence of Ferry Beach. If it is cold, there is warmth, if it is warm, there is light and cheer. Here friend talks with friend, or, if the friendship is perfect, the two may sit in silence. Emerson and Margaret Fuller were that kind of friends. Here also there is music. The young Lynn man played "O Thou Sublime Sweet Evening Star," by Wagner. The talented young lady from the parsonage at Augusta gave a beautiful recital. Before this fire also, Mr. Collins of Danbury held the little prayer service each night—bright, cheery, reassuring, strengthening.

Some "pep" and "jazz" at Ferry Beach of course —but not all "pep" and "jazz," for which God be praised. A jolly good time, dancing and fun, bonfires and frolics; but a little study along with it, some reading on the soft pine needles of the grove, some glorious excursions up and down the coast and in the great hinterland of Maine and New Hampshire.

CHAPTER XL

THE FIRST TRIP TO CAPE COD

TO the sons and daughters of Cape Cod, it must seem strange to talk about a first trip "to the Cape."

They have always lived there, it may be, and their folks have "always" lived there, and Cape Cod is indissolubly entwined with their memories. There is nothing in life that is as sure to them as that Cape Cod is the best place on earth to live. If they go away to West Virginia or to Ohio, to California or to other remote places, they always manage some way or other to get back to the Cape for the summer.

One of the most Menckenesque Universalists I ever knew—a man of brilliant brain, savage tongue and burning passion for reality—inevitably let his deep-seated tenderness surge up when any one mentioned "the Cape."

For five years I have been planning to run over to Provincetown at the tip end of the Cape—only forty-five miles from Boston across the Massachusetts Bay, only 120 miles by rail or motor the long way around.

Like many things one can do any time, it has been put off until duty made it imperative.

All through the summer season the steamboat "Dorothy Bradford" plies between Boston and Provincetown, making a round trip a day, taking four hours each way.

The Saturday morning that we went the boat was held for late comers, and we had a peaceful hour on the upper deck in the sun studying life along the old wharves of Boston, and watching men and women

on the adjoining boat prepare their bait, get out their lines and make ready for a day on the fishing banks.

The eleventh annual excursion of the young people of the Swedish Congregational Churches of Massachusetts filled the boat with pretty flaxen-haired Swedish girls and their escorts, and with fine old elders who spoke in the Swedish tongue. Next to us on the upper deck sat an interesting looking young woman with whom we began a conversation. She proved to be a member of the faculty of the New York State College for Teachers at Albany—a critic teacher for French and Spanish.

The sail to Provincetown is delightful (when it is delightful). It is squarely out to sea, and a northeast storm can make it anything but a delight. Once or twice every season a heavy fog makes it impossible for the boat to find her dock, and then the excursionists have to stay out all night.

Going over we had ideal weather—a cool southwest breeze and a warm sun, dancing, sparkling wavelets relieving the monotony of a calm sea, a clear atmosphere through which looking back we could see the tall tower of the Custom House in Boston many miles away, and the tall Pilgrim Monument on the Cape long before we made the turn into the harbor.

We spent our time in Provincetown simply prowling around—poking into odd corners, looking into little shops, following up narrow lanes, climbing up where we could see the dunes or look out to sea, and coming back where we could make contact again with interesting folks.

The Madame never tired of the dunes—sand hills the natives call them—the picturesque mounds of sand made by the wind and more than once unmade. Because of fear that shifting sand in the storms of winter might sometime engulf the town, the Com-

monwealth has been busy "anchoring the hills" with plants. Beach grass, Scotch broom, buckwheat, native pines, soft pines and other European pines, and acres of bayberry bushes have been planted, and pine boughs have been cut and strewn to catch the seeds of the beach grass. Grass, the bayberry and the pine seem to be doing the business. But, naked or clothed in vegetation, the sand dunes are beautiful. They brought back vividly our life at La Panne on the North Sea, where the King and Queen of the Belgians lived during the World War.

A little poem on the dunes by Moreland is quoted by Nancy Paine Smith in her book on Provincetown:

> What is your age, O Dunes,
> And what ancient secrets
> Are thrust deep in your yellow bosom?
> The wind knows—
> I have seen him
> Whisper to you
> And caress you,
> And in his great anger
> Smite you.

We brought back with us one of Billie May's exquisite photographs of the dunes. Its lights and shadows are remarkable. Even with oils and water colors it is hard for artists to put on canvas the light that falls on the dunes.

In Provincetown in the summer there are (*a*) two thousand native residents, (*b*) twenty-five hundred Portuguese (mostly fishermen), (*c*) several hundred tourists, the greater part of whom come by motor and stay but one night, (*d*) a delightful summer colony of people living in hotels, boarding houses and their own homes, and including one of the largest colonies of artists in the country.

The motorists drive in late in the day, walk up

and down the main street after dark, motor in the morning up to the "marker" where the Pilgrims landed, turn back and disappear.

They seldom get more than a fleeting impression of the Cape. The artists and the literary people work the mine of Cape Cod life and see more than some of the natives. Nancy W. Paine Smith tells about the many wonderful places the artists have discovered and rigged up as studios—old rotting buildings at the ends of wharves, old barns, and houses both new and old scattered "along the shore, along the streets and on the hills."

Provincetown is full of typical Cape Cod houses, "low, comfortable, unpretentious," Mrs. Smith calls them, "fitting into the barren shores and the rolling hills," "an expression of the feeling of the people who built them."

We admired the Pilgrim Monument, and especially were delighted with the far-reaching view from the top, but it seemed out of place among the old Cape Cod houses and in the Cape Cod atmosphere. It is a beautiful Italian campanile, 252 feet high, and was built by the United States Government, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the town of Provincetown, and by a Memorial Association with members in all parts of the country. It cost $95,000. It is one thing to say that the monument does not fit the surroundings and another thing to say what would fit.

The architect who had the task of making plans for the Universalist church had a sense of what would fit to an unusual degree. Not only is the church one of the most beautiful colonial churches in New England and one of the most satisfying in the denomination, it is so perfectly adapted to quaint historic old Provincetown that the moment one sees it he exclaims, "It fits the place exactly."

That artists are busy painting it every pleasant day, that paintings of it hang in galleries all over the world, that magazines reproduce it constantly, is an old story to our people. All I can add is that it is as beautiful as represented, and one of the churches which satisfy. Simeon C. Smith, a Provincetown boy who became a member of the faculty of the State University of West Virginia, has told the story of the church in his "Leaves from an Old Church Record Book," first published in 1922—a little book which deserves its steadily increasing sale.

Speaking of the origin of the Christian Union Society, as the church was first called, he says:

> The sea has given us everything, even our religion. In 1820 two young girls, Sylvia and Elizabeth Freeman, were one day playing on the shore on Long Point. The settlement, as every one knows, began on Long Point. Something washing about in the tide attracted their attention, and fishing it out with a long stick they at last brought to the beach a water-soaked book, "The Life of John Murray." Strange that that book fell overboard and, stranger still, that ocean currents brought it over leagues of stormy sea, to that little group of houses on the tip end of Cape Cod! But there was vitality enough in the book and especially in John Murray's religion to keep both afloat. After the book was dried it was passed about from hand to hand. Many read and believed what Murray preached. Thus began the liberal religion in our town. It must have been no easy task for them to leave their old church and its associations and their friends, and come out boldly to embrace the new faith. They were pioneers, like their Pilgrim ancestors, and formed a new organization that symbolized what they believed to be sane and good and true.

A marble tablet in the vestibule of the church commemorates this picturesque incident, and gives the date of the organization of the parish as 1829.

In the vestibule also is a picture of "Elizabeth Freeman, 1809-1876," and of "her daughter Elizabeth, former organist, 1843-1908."

The present structure, called by Robert H. Schauffler, in his "Romantic America," "the finest colonial church on the Cape if not in New England," was built in 1847.

In 1879, about the time our country had such an orgy of tearing out beautiful colonial pulpits and pews, this society to please their pastor reluctantly made away with a beautiful pulpit and altar which fitted the church, and for them substituted a low platform and cheap preaching desk. Prof. Simeon Smith says that the altar and an old table were sold for four dollars and sixty-seven cents, "the most pathetic statement recorded in the old record book for a period of ninety years."

I had not seen the account of the restoration, and was delighted to find that I was to preach if not in the old pulpit at least in a perfect reproduction, which included a part of it. In the pulpit also stood an old mahogany settee, which had furnished the pulpit of the original Universalist church. It had been sold to the Methodists when the new church was built, dragged out of a fire, thrown into the junk, pulled out for a dance hall, and lost to sight for years. With loving, patient care George Watson, the sexton, did the work of restoring and upholstering it. It goes well with the new pulpit. If the old piece could speak what ups and downs it could describe. One felt like laying one's hand upon it and saying, "Well done, for you have seen it through."

Provincetown is not the only place on the Cape which has a beautiful colonial Universalist church. Orleans has one. The Orleans congregation on this rainy Sunday drove a distance of twenty miles to worship with us. We all broke bread together in the

basement of the church after the morning service. The Rev. Nancy Paine Smith was toastmistress. E. M. Paine, her brother, and the Rev. Thomas Cross of Orleans were the main speakers, and the Rev. Charles Herbert Small of Plymouth Community Church, Cleveland, and "Johannes" also responded. Mr. Small, born in the shadow of Highland Light, voiced the deep feeling of affection he had for the Cape, and paid a noble tribute to the service of the Universalist church.

After all, at Provincetown it is the Pilgrim story which interests one most. In Provincetown harbor the little Mayflower first dropped her anchor after a voyage of over two months. Somewhere on the narrow, sandy, curving cape they first stepped ashore. Governor Bradford says: "Being thus arrived in a good harbor and brought safe to land they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of Heaven who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean and delivered them from all perils and miseries thereof again to set their feet upon the firm and stable earth their proper element."

The history of those first months as set down by Bradford is a moving narrative.

They had come to a bleak, rocky shore, and every day discovered new dangers and realized more keenly the width of the ocean which separated them from their old home.

In their boats they rowed around the great bay for five weeks and then, driven by the captain of the ship to a quick decision and finding no better place, they established themselves at Plymouth.

"Disgust and impatience," said Mr. Paine as we sat at dinner, "combined with the fact that at Plymouth they found land that would do, hurried the decision."

The sons and daughters of the Mayflower living

at Provincetown know the facts and tell them simply and unaffectedly. It puts one back into the atmosphere of the early days to hear these great events of American history put into the informal speech of every day life, and to hear little true incidents handed down through the generations which make the Pilgrims men and women of real flesh and blood.

On Saturday afternoon we went into the Congregational church, the old church of the Pilgrim fathers, for a half hour service in honor of the Pilgrims of a later day who had come down with us on the boat. The Swedish people filled the church, and our beloved Dr. Frederick E. Emrich, summer pastor, spoke to them in their native tongue.

When they sang many an eye filled with tears. They too knew what it was to put an ocean between them and their fatherland. They, too, could think with sympathy of the Pilgrims of three hundred years ago.

The same old faith abides through the years. Men do not forget the touching words of Governor Bradford:

> May not and ought not the children of these fathers rightly say: Our faithers were Englishmen which came over this great ocean and were ready to perish in this wilderness; but they cried unto ye Lord, and he heard their voyce and looked on their adversitie.

CHAPTER XLI

TWO NATURE LECTURES IN ONE DAY

TWO students of Nature lectured in Boston recently on the same day—Arthur N. Pillsbury and William L. Finley. One spoke in the forenoon for the Massachusetts Garden Clubs at the Exeter Theater, just across the street from the Universalist Publishing House, and the other in the afternoon at Tremont Temple before the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Both lectures were remarkable from the standpoint of photography and projection. Both filled the audiences with enthusiasm. And both differed widely from usual nature lectures and from each other.

It is especially interesting to listen to men who have achieved something. The professional who gets together beautiful pictures and interesting facts has his place, but to me the man whose lecture is a by-product of an important work means much more. Roosevelt coming back from Africa, Peary or Macmillan or Shackleton from the Arctics, Harriet Chalmers Adams from the Andes and Beebe from the bottom of the sea, illustrate what I mean. There is a moral quality in the story they have to tell. So with the two men in Boston. Both were serious students of nature—Pillsbury a laboratory man, Finley an out-of-doors man. Both were after the facts. Both looked below the surface. Both realized the splendid unity beneath the infinite variety of nature.

Mr. Pillsbury for years has been working to photograph the growth of plants, trees and flowers. By specially built lenses and cameras, by microscope, by a motor and automatic devices, he has been able

to focus his camera on a plant for a day, a week or a fortnight, take photographs every twenty seconds or every five minutes as necessary, and then by running the picture through at the proper speed throw on the screen a motion picture of the leaf uncurling, or the flower opening, or the root pursuing its way down into the ground, throwing off rootlets as it goes along, or of many other wonderful things in nature the movement of which is constant but so slow that we can not detect it.

"The joy of plant study," said Mr. Pillsbury, "is to learn its habits. We have a bouquet of many flowers in a quiet room, and as we glance at it from time to time it looks much the same. By photographing it every five minutes and then showing the pictures at the rate of sixty a second, we can see that the various flowers of the bouquet are in continual motion, the younger buds opening, the older flowers passing on." "If a flower takes a week," he said, "to live its life story, we set the camera to take a picture each fifteen minutes. That gives us thirty-five feet of film which we show you in forty or fifty seconds."

Walter D. Kerst, technical editor of *Amateur Movie Makers*, did not exaggerate when he wrote recently of the Pillsbury pictures: "Those scenes where one sees the opening and closing, the life and death, of flowers, in the twinkling of an eye, are nothing short of magic."

We saw the results from focusing the camera aided by the microscope for three or four days on a single drop of water, which is full of marvelous plant life, and also on the big trees of California.

Most of the pictures had been sent to Paris and had been beautifully colored. Mr. Pillsbury showed us the wild flowers of the Yosemite Valley, the results of months of study in the Botanical Gardens of St. Louis, and trees and flowers of Hawaii. The pur-

ple heather, languid lady, California poppy, blazing star, trillium, columbine, wild rose, and choke-cherry came first—the petals opening, the pistils and anthers slowly pushing up, the bees coming for the pollen. "Every movement," he said, "means something. The flower that opens only at night is white or yellow, the colors most easily seen by night flying insects."

As a child I was fascinated by the tall grass called timothy and by the beautiful growth of corn. Here for the first time in my life I saw both the timothy and the corn put forth their buds and blossoms. "The flowers of the grasses," said the lecturer, "are especially interesting."

The temperance people in the audience vigorously applauded visible demonstration of the effects of bootleg whiskey on flowers—the picture showing vases of California poppies in water, in weak bootleg and pure bootleg, the latter dying rapidly. Thus were illustrated also the effects of drugs.

To get the Mariposa lily the camera ran seven days, to get the snow plant eight days. To get the orchids, it took two or three weeks, one of the lady slippers twenty-three days, but the results were beautiful.

Even more fascinating were the ferns, the mosses, one of the 600,000 leaves of a California oak, which drinks up five hundred pails of water a day, and the sugar pine of California, with cones eighteen to twenty-eight inches long. In Hawaii several of the six thousand kinds of hibiscus and other tropical flowers were photographed.

Mr. Pillsbury prefers to carry on researches without interruption, and the lecture tours break in on his work so seriously that he plans in the future to lecture only every other year. By means of a new X-ray apparatus he hopes to see what goes on inside of the plant. He gave us hints of the possibilities

when he showed us the nucleus of the pollen moving about in the tiny grain.

With a new microscope now being made for him he expects to study both diseased and healthy tissue at the same time—and possibly throw some light on fundamental causes of disease. He works not only with plant tissue but with animal tissue.

By faith in the possibilities, of course, he has been enabled to do his work. It was interesting to note also that he has been led by his studies to a deeper religious faith. "One can not long be an atheist," he said, "and work on plant life. There are too many wonderful things."

The afternoon lecture was a description of a trip along the Continental Divide in the summer of 1927 under the auspices of the American Nature Association, led by Arthur N. Pack, president of the Association, and by William L. Finley. Mr. Pack is telling the story in the *Nature Magazine*, the organ of the Association. It will run serially until September and then probably appear in book form. Judging from the January and February installments, we should say that few more stirring stories of Camera Hunting have been written.

In Mr. Finley's lecture we had the essence of it. Mr. Finley by birth is a Californian, but for some years has lived in Oregon. He has been a member of the Board of Fish and Game Commissioners of that state, State Game Warden, and State Biologist. He is now a member of the State Game Commission and a member of an Advisory Board for the United States Department of Agriculture, as well as on the editorial staff of *Nature Magazine*, published in Washington, D. C.

From Pillsbury to Finley we went from the infinitely small to the infinitely large, from the inside of a drop of water to roaring mountain streams and

cascades, from cultivated gardens to the Continental Divide, from the life story of a single blossom to the life story of the Rocky Mountains, from pictures of bees and other insects buried in pollen to pictures of grizzly bears climbing trees, antelope traveling forty-five miles an hour over the plains, and the big-horns and mountain goats leaping securely from crag to crag, where a single slip would have sent them rolling for thousands of feet.

The Pack-Finley expedition traveled over mountain trails on horseback. Much of the time they were in the wildest parts of the Glacier National Park, close to the Canada line. In interesting places, they would camp for several days. The Finley motion picture reels, this year, are by far the finest he has ever exhibited, and among the finest we have ever seen. At one moment we were walking on the edge of precipices, looking down on rocky gorges and little mountain lakes, then we were whipping a trout stream and landing a pound or half-pound trout. To rest us we were taken back to camp, where we squatted by the fire and had close-up pictures of the trout sizzling in the pan.

The camp of the man who knows wild creatures attracts the wild creatures. Nobody stones them or shouts at them. In getting acquainted with the animals and birds those who are "on the inside" realize the importance of no loud or sudden noises, no quick or brusque movements. The little creatures seemed to walk up to the Finley camp and pose for their pictures. The ground squirrel, or gopher, and the golden mantled squirrel soon came up to eat out of the hand. The gray jay or camp robber flew fearlessly to the dinner table to seize what he could find. Clark's crow, or the nutcracker, was frequently close by. To me none of these things was as surprising as the pictures of the grouse—the ptarmigan or snow

grouse, the blue grouse and the Franklin grouse or fool-hen, running around the men's feet as if they had been tame chickens, even permitting gentle stroking of the back, and finally one of them at least allowing them to pick him up and cuddle him. "The cook," said Mr. Finley at this picture, "was inclined to the opinion that these grouse belonged in the frying pan, but after he picked one up he could not kill it, nor could any man with a heart kill one of these trusting birds."

There were beautiful pictures of a cony, baby jack rabbits, of a marmot with her baby, an interesting coyote den with the baby coyotes—too young to run away—a water ouzel jumping about under the spray of a dashing stream to make a meal of larvae, and some of the wilderness rats.

It was no great feat to photograph the bears, for they had no fear of man and were out simply and solely for the good things to eat which they knew human beings had at their disposal, but it was a different matter to get pictures of the big-horn, or Rocky Mountain sheep, and of the mountain goats.

Up among the towering peaks of Indian Pass, the party sighted elk and Rocky Mountain sheep, and later secured wonderful pictures of the goats.

For years the goats eluded Mr. Finley. This year to the observer it seemed as if he took desperate chances to secure his pictures. The goat has a hoof sharp as a knife at the edges and with a thick soft pad like rubber in the center. It can cling to a rock almost like a fly, lie down comfortably where a man would have trouble to stand, and run over rock, ice, snow where a man trying to follow would go to certain death. After repeated failures with the goats, success came to the party by climbing to the top of the divide above the goats. When alarmed the goat almost always goes up. With camera posted the men

would let out a yell or drop a rock, and snap the goats as they came bounding up.

Much more intimate were the pictures taken at Jennings Lodge, Oregon, the home base of William L. and Irene Finley. There we saw the results of months of study of a Rocky Mountain goat taken in Canada, and of an antelope captured by the Pack-Finley party—both taken so young that they grew up as household pets. Over all these pictures, goat and antelope sucking milk through a rubber nipple, playing with the dog, butting the door to get into the house, might be written the inscription, "Patience hath her perfect work," or the passage from St. James about "the surpassing gift of kindness."

Various species in our beautiful wild life that Mr. Finley showed us are in danger of becoming extinct. The grizzly and bison are safe, thanks to protection, but the antelope is going, and various kinds of ducks, geese, swan, and other interesting water fowl are on the road to extinction.

We human beings are the lords of creation, trustees for all the rest. How are we fulfilling the trust? Life will be robbed of much that is fascinating and important if we let our little brothers and sisters of the wild be exterminated. If the law of love does not appeal to us, and we have to be a little careful about urging it in Congress, then we may very well appeal to prudential considerations, business reasons, or plain common sense, in urging more sanctuaries.

Exhibition of pictures like those of the Pack-Finley expeditions, stories like those Mr. Finley told simply and modestly that February day in Boston, make us realize that conservation means more than board feet of timber. It means the forests themselves, the great open spaces and the creatures which God has set there to live.

CHAPTER XLII

THE PILGRIMAGE TO OLD KENSINGTON

VERY betimes up" I recorded in my journal the second Sunday of August, 1928, quoting the modern Pepys. The sun was a ball of red on the eastern horizon. The tower of the Second Universalist Church in Boston, seen from my lofty window, was ablaze with rosy light. But I was not going to this beautiful Gothic temple. It was not open anyway. Forty-five miles away to the northeast there was an old wooden meeting-house, dear to the heart of the first pastor of the Second Society, which had been long closed and which this day was to be reopened. It was the day of the pilgrimage of New Hampshire Universalists to "Old Kensington," down in the southeast corner of the state.

The journey to Old Kensington was not difficult. Even a local train stopping at almost every crossing has advantages on such a morning. The showers of Saturday night had brought down the temperature and carried off the humidity. There was a new tang to the air, a new zest to life. Dressing, breakfast, the quiet streets, the subway, the North Station, the miles of interlocking tracks and switches, soon were behind me. I came to life at Malden beside an open lot which was ablaze with the first goldenrod. Summer was getting on. Then Melrose with its lovely gardens and lawns, hydrangeas, gladioli, hollyhocks and sunflowers. Every vacant lot in town was full of magnificent chicory—much larger than usual—responding like all other vegetation to one of the greatest seasons ever known in the eastern part of the country for luxuriant growth.

On to Wakefield and Reading. Joe-pye-weed, butter-and-eggs, meadow-sweet, fireweed and a number of favorites up close to the tracks, pastures going back to trees and bushes, making open woods where the sun shines and where anything might be found, little swamps full of cat-tails and purple with pickerel-weed, old orchards, big boulders, stone walls, or, as the Madame calls them, "stone fences," frequently tumbled over so that if they are to be used as fences a strand or two of wire has to be run along the top. Ferns, brakes, yarrow, more villages, and finally at South Lawrence the lovely valley of the Merrimac. Really we ought to be in New Hampshire at this point and would be if the surveyors had not swung the Massachusetts line northward here to take a big chunk out of New Hampshire.

One crosses the state line near Atkinson and enters Rockingham County, N. H. The Universalists have a Rockingham Association, organized back in 1824. The Rev. Asa M. Bradley wrote an interesting account of the hundred years of activity for the centennial. Hosea Ballou, Dolphus Skinner, Sebastian Streeter and Lemuel Willis were among the ministers who participated in the first meeting. It probably took Hosea Ballou the greater part of a day to drive out the forty-five or fifty miles to Kensington church. Even on a local train it took me only a little over two hours. The Rev. Asa M. Bradley, New Hampshire State Superintendent, and his ward, young Webster of Tufts College, met me at East Kingston with a motor car. Here we left Massachusetts time and got into "God's time" and thus gained an hour. It was a full day. This veteran Bradley who claims to be all crippled up with rheumatism hits forty miles an hour about half a minute after he gets into his car. We drove three miles to Kingston Plains, rested, visited, walked about the village, and drove nine miles

back through East Kingston to Kensington, returning in the afternoon over the same route to Kingston again. Here we had two hours in Mr. Bradley's big house before we whirled off "the long way around," nine miles to Exeter to catch the express for Boston.

Old Kensington Church stands in the open country where three roads meet. The sign-board at the intersection says, Hampton Falls 4 miles, Hampton 6, Exeter 3 and Amesbury 6. There is nothing at this intersection except two churches and a town hall, all built of wood, all white with green blinds. The town hall stands between the two churches, whether as a link or as a wall it is hard to say. Back when the town was first set off around 1737, an older church was built here, far more beautiful than either of the present churches. It was large and well proportioned, with old square pews and high pulpit—a typical New England meeting-house. But along about 1840 it had to be repaired, and some watch-dog of the treasury conceived the idea of taking it down and using the material for a new church and a town house. So that was done. The new church was a union affair, the Sundays being allotted to the different denominations in proportion to the number of pew owners.

About 1865 the Congregationalists pulled out and built a new church on the other side of the town hall. This left nothing much of the union movement except Universalists, and ever since they have been in charge. The church is square, with a wooden tower, plain, simple, roomy. Nothing especially beautiful about it—nothing ugly. It probably will seat upward of 300 people. On the south side along the road stretches a graveyard which dates back to very early times. Until two or three years ago it was a most unique and beautiful graveyard in a grove of large white pines. The trees, however, were old and some of them had fallen on the gravestones, and the town

meeting voted to cut them down. Strong opposition sprang up, but the action stood. Not a shrub or bush or single young pine was left—nothing but large stumps even with the ground. Those who tried to save the trees simply flung up their hands in despair. Those who voted for the action are beginning to wonder if a few young trees might not now be set out. It does not seem to have occurred to the town meeting that a simple solution would have been to take out a few dangerous trees and leave the unique grove unspoiled. As it is the bodies of the old settlers have been sent off in the form of 37,000 feet of pine boards. I had rather have them up in the tree tops.

Mr. Prescott helped me find a grave with a unique inscription: "Benjamin Rowe, Esquire, after a life of great usefulness and patiently enduring four years' illness with a dropsy and underwent the operation of tapping 67 times from the body was drawn 2385 pounds of water, quietly departed this life the 28th day of March, A. D. 1790 in the 71st year of his age." There are other inscriptions almost equally unique and interesting. The graveyard is a veritable laboratory of local history.

From our interesting researches among the inscriptions, the bell called us to worship—fifty of us in all. Of Universalist ministers, besides Bradley and the writer, there were Whippen of Middletown, N. Y., whose father for a quarter of a century was minister at Kingston and bishop of the countryside, Noble of Quincy, who is staying at Newton, N. H., and Shook of Concord—all coming in large cars and "bringing loads." Representative Roland D. Sawyer, a Congregational clergyman of Ware, Mass., who for fifteen years has represented his people in the Massachusetts legislature, came over from his summer camp near by. Altenbern of Manchester and Rev. E. J. Prescott of Hampton Falls, a Unitarian, were there for the after-

noon. Other places represented in the congregation were Salem, East Kingston, Kingston, Exeter, West Newbury and Dover, N. H., and Ware and Amesbury, Mass.

Mr. Bradley, both morning and afternoon, made an admirable statement of the object of the meeting. He said in substance:

"We have before us one of the pathetic things brought about by the industrial changes of New England. We are worshiping in a church which has no congregation. We can count on the fingers of one hand those who are left. The last Sunday this church was open the janitor, Mr. Osgood and I, sat here alone. I can recall in the days of my father's pastorate that the church was filled to overflowing every pleasant Sunday. I recall a Sunday school in which were two full pews of boys. The change that has come does not mean decay. It means shifting. The people have gone to other fields. When I lived in the Hawaiian Islands I was surprised to find so many New England people. I recall the days of small industries here, little shops in the yards of village homes. Now mass production has taken these people to the cities. The farms, too, are carried on with much less help.

"But an influence has gone out of this old church, as from the other church a few rods down the road. The New England conscience has made its impress on the nation.

"Let us not look back with deep regret. Let us rejoice in our new day. Let us think of this old house and of this old graveyard as memorials to those who lived in the houses around here and worshiped at these altars and gave us our day of opportunity. Let us think to-day that around us are the spirits of those once here, but let us not turn our eyes backward but forward.

"We live in a changing age. We face a changed Protestantism. We are going to see a new alignment. It will come, but it may not come in just the way we think. We have prayed for years that 'all may be one.' Yet when some one comes along to sit in the seat with us, we do not want to move over. As I look at it we have been busy 125 to 150 years magnifying our differences. I suggest we take time to look at our likenesses."

Altenbern preached a most effective sermon in the afternoon. Noble offered prayer in the morning and Representative Sawyer in the afternoon.

At the noon recess Mr. Sawyer took me about the neighborhood in his car. The hill overlooking the church is named Hoosac Hill. The owner in the days of the American Revolution shouldered his musket and went off to the war. He fought at Saratoga, and came home over Hoosac Mountain, and brought the name back to his own highest hill. Up the other road Mr. Sawyer took me to the parsonage built for Parson Fogg when the first church was built—nothing much left of its beauty except the old doorway with its original bullseye glass above. And in front for many years stood two elms named after two slaves (owned by the minister), "Primus" and "Phyllis." George Osgood, antiquarian and genealogist, who lives in the "manse" and is custodian of the church, told us the history.

Finally we visited Mr. Sawyer's camp—a delightful spot in the pines—a cabin here, a cabin there, a kitchen yonder, plenty of room, a place to sleep, a place to study, a place to visit, a place to eat—all simple as befits the great apostle of "simplification."

Roland D. Sawyer is often in the headlines of the Massachusetts papers, always in the fight for decency, for liberty, for equal rights. All the years of my Boston life I have realized that here was a per-

sonality. This day at Old Kensington I realized what kind of personality—intensely human, a love of nature, devoted to the traditions of Old Kensington, a thorn in the side of the standpatters, but personally loved by many who fight him. All of his political philosophy, all of his theology, were in the simple, reverent prayer he made in the afternoon. Starting in a Republican district as a Democrat, with a majority of a hundred, he has gone on increasing it for fifteen years, until it is now between one and two thousand. The people who know him best stick to him.

What reminiscences we had over Mrs. Clark's bountiful lunch basket at noon!

Mr. Sawyer's Universalism started back with one of his grandfathers attending an orthodox church. He became greatly enraged by this statement of the preacher: "We have no assurance in Scripture that children who die in infancy unbaptized will ever get to heaven." Seizing his "plug hat" he started for the door, pausing to say to one of his friends, and not in a whisper: "Damn your infant damnation." "Later Hosea Ballou and Sylvanus Cobb," Mr. Sawyer said, "always stayed at this grandfather's house when they came to Kensington."

It was pleasant to prowl around old Kingston in the morning with Mr. Bradley and Mr. Webster, and in the afternoon with the Altenberns. The town has only 900 people. The village is strung out along two sides of the longest common I ever saw—like Boston Common once used as the field for general training. Mrs. Frank Whippen occupies the Universalist parsonage for the summer. Near by is the church where her husband ministered so long, built in 1780. Behind Mr. Bradley's garden is the village graveyard. About the first stone we came to marked the grave of Mrs. Bradley, who died a year ago. Mr.

Whippen lies near. He also died in 1927. One stone carried the names of four ministers: Tappan, Secome, Clark and Thayer. Clark was ordained in 1725. They were not ordained as Congregationalists. They were ordained ministers of Kingston. In their day a town had only one minister.

The most interesting stone was that to Governor Bartlett, whose old house faces Mr. Bradley's house. "This monument is erected over the sacred relics of His Excellency, Josiah Bartlett, Late Governor of New Hampshire, who died May 19, 1795, in the 65th year of his age, and his virtuous and amicable consort Mrs. Mary Bartlett, who died July 14, 1789, in the 59th year of her age.

"Fragrant is the recollection of friends. The most delightful flowers shall be scattered upon their valuable remains when we recall the sacred spot to mind. And the congenial tear shall sparkle in the eye of sympathy, and their virtues shall be embalmed in the warm bosom of affection."

The stone is slowly crumbling. The inscription is almost undecipherable. It took time to make it out.

It was a pleasure to visit this ancient village with one who loved it, who recognized that changes were inevitable, but who wasted no time on laments.

As in Old Kensington, so in Kingston the industries have gone. The population has dwindled. The taxable values have gone down and schools and new roads have sent the tax rates up. But what creates an emergency often brings the remedy. More people are discovering the quiet beauty of these inland New England towns. Many are seeking them for summer homes and even all the year round homes. The motor car makes it possible for men to do business a dozen or twenty miles away.

Mrs. Stevens, the State Secretary for the Sunday

School Association, lives in Kingston, and has a charming home, with a fireplace large enough to take in a real log. Her husband goes to his business daily in the next town.

As for the churches, Mr. Bradley sends out the message: "Your car will run as well toward church as away from it."

The New Hampshire Universalists, under the leadership of men like Bradley, the State Superintendent, and Danforth, the State President, are moving on unafraid of the changes of to-day, and ready for the opportunities of to-morrow.

About the last thing we saw in old Kingston was Marshall Street—the house which stands on the site of the house which stood on the site of the house where Harold Marshall was born, and the long line of houses where cousins or uncles or cousin-uncles of Harold Marshall live to-day.

The place is dear to our colleague, and we were delighted to find him so respected in the place of his birth.

The Little Hill Farm

CHAPTER XLIII

THE FIRST DAY AT THE FARM

THE first day at the farm is a day when one looks about and sees old things with new eyes. A whole year may have passed since one has seen these familiar fields and buildings. It is usually a day of deep impression. Having often written about the "Little Hill Farm" to which we go sometimes in the summer I will indicate only in outline what it is.

It is a wild, hilly farm in the town of Summit, county of Schoharie, state of New York, seven miles from the village down in the valley where I was born.* Some of the fields on this farm are worked on shares by a neighboring farmer, whose house, perched still higher on a shoulder of the mountain, enables him to keep an eye on our place. Besides getting in the hay and potatoes, this man paints the barns, re-lays the foundation walls of buildings, tars the roofs, mows the door-yard and does other services hard to classify but all important about a place. The best part of it is that all his work is done willingly and cheerfully. He is paid, of course, but the money end always seems to be in the background and the neighborly end in the foreground. So if something we want done this year gets crowded over to next year, it is all right with us, for we know that it will come along in time, and we know also that, deserted though the place is the greater part of the year, it never will go to rack and ruin like so many other abandoned farms. Besides, we are interested in this man because he is good to his father and mother, who live with him and

*Cobleskill, N. Y.

make a home for him—the mother now frail and feeble, the father on crutches from the loss of his leg some years ago, but still able to do odd jobs as a carpenter and wheelwright.

The Little Hill Farm lies at the head of a valley which runs up from the main valley. The farm buildings are at an elevation of 1,500 feet. The higher points on the farm up near the main Richmondville-Summit road rise probably to 2,000 feet. Summit itself, called one of the highest incorporated villages in New York State, is two miles on up the steep dirt road which passes the farm.

We can drive up to the farm easily in twenty-five minutes from Cobleskill. There is an attractive old farmhouse on the place, white with green blinds, furnished adequately for all of our simple needs, and barn buildings more than adequate for hay and wood and storage and to wander in on stormy days.

Our scale of living up here is simple, necessarily, but good. A Ford sedan, such as we borrow for the expedition, will carry food enough for a month or two if one wanted to stock up that way. But we do not. A couple of loaves of bread, a pound of butter, a dozen eggs, a sack of potatoes, a bottle of milk, a beefsteak or a few chops, some tinned fruits, a head or two of lettuce, and a pound of coffee, and we are all set. Non-perishable staples like sugar, salt, pepper, flour, dry cereals, are supposed to be kept there, and it is the understanding that any member of the family using the place will replenish such things when they run out. It is understood also that kerosene oil for cooking and lighting will be there, candles put away safely from the mice, and wood enough for a few days at least. The wood fires are one of the delights of life in this well-wooded country. Also if we meet the Cobleskill ice man when we are starting we buy a hundred pounds of ice, and we have one of the dis-

carded ice chests of the family in which to keep perishables. If we don't run upon the ice man or our ice gives out, the cellar does very well. When we run out of milk, eggs or butter, we go down the road to the neighbors. All the farmers have been kind to us in allowing us to replenish our larder.

While it is a country of hill farms, it is a good country to live on. We try to get there before the wild strawberries are gone. If we are too late the raspberries are coming on, or the blackberries. And if we want to go to the tops of the higher hills, there are blueberries. More than once the neighbors have sold us fat broilers, and so we never worry much about the commissary. Who wants anything better than bread and butter, field berries, baked potatoes, and a bit of cheese, and a cup of steaming hot Delmonico coffee—the aroma of which will carry clear out to the big barn? If there are eggs and bacon, or a tender steak, or a chicken, to help out—why then we thank God for luxuries, but one can live without.

The first day at the farm we had cookies brought to the car by a neighbor just as we were starting out of the yard at Cobleskill. Nothing better in the cooky line can be imagined than the cookies this friendly woman makes. Not even Schraffts in Boston and New York can produce anything as good.

The first day at the farm this year was unusually beautiful. It was the day after the cold and windy Fourth of July. The wind had gone down and the sun had come out bright and warm. The air was clear and bracing, the sky a deep blue, and there were great white fleecy clouds.

We took our time going up—stopping to visit an old graveyard half a mile off the road.

It was getting on toward noon when we reached the farm. The man had been up the day before and "laid down" enough grass to make paths to the build-

ings, but all else was one wild, luxuriant tangle of vegetation. Instead of a lawn there was tall timothy in the front yard, above which rose innumerable bushes and shrubs which my Rochester brother had set out in years past—the spirea past blooming, the two syringa bushes still in blossom and filling the air with fragrance, the big double red roses just at their height although partly hidden in the grass, a grape-vine covering a pear tree so completely that if one penetrated the thicket one seemed shut off from the world altogether.

Stopping the car by the back door, we sat quietly for a few moments looking about. The buildings were all shut and the doors locked. The water dripped steadily from the artesian well, and honey-bees and wasps were drinking on the cool mossy stones where the spray fell. In the five or ten minutes that we sat there we saw a yellow warbler feeding a baby warbler in a plum tree, a little gentleman goldfinch, looking very brave in his yellow and black suit, accompanied by his modest lady, investigating some red raspberry vines, a black and white warbler on an apple tree, several cedar waxwings in a cherry tree, a phoebe catching flies near the spray of the artesian well, a cat-bird in the mulberry, a Maryland yellow-throat singing in a hazel bush, and robins and song sparrows all over the place.

I saw a swiftly moving furry thing run through the tall grass and dart under the wagon house. I thought it was the neighbors' cat until the next day, when I saw a woodchuck quite at home in the yard.

A place that is left alone much of the year is quickly adopted by all the wild creatures round about, especially if it is well watered and has many convenient tangles and stone walls and foundations in which they can take refuge.

Once unloaded, it did not take us long to get

THE FARM BUILDINGS AND THE HIGH FIELDS

wood, make a fire, carry water, and start the teakettle singing.

Where we live in Brookline a special oil furnace sends us such hot water in the pipes, both night and day, that we never put the kettle on. We never hear a kettle sing. The nearest we get to a cricket on the hearth is an imitation cricket in the bottom of the elevator shaft. At the farm, in a big old-fashioned kitchen with windows on three sides and a large wood range, we have the music of both fire and water. The fire draws with a steady subdued hum and the kettle sings songs of comfort, cheer, and contentment.

One of my friends wrote me a while ago: "Brother, people are tired of hearing of the weird things you put into that strange stomach of yours." Perhaps so. But this s not a tale of snails or horse meat. And people are never tired of a kettle that sings or of the things that go with it—golden butter and good bread, "a comforting dish of tea," or cup of coffee, berries just from the meadows, honest cheese made by honest men, honest eggs made by honest hens.

There was a great clearing up that first afternoon. I have about decided that it is more fun to sweep out ourselves than to have a neighbor do it a few days in advance. One learns so much about the bottoms of things as well as the tops. One studies out such new methods of going after dirt in the corners. One gets such admirable lessons in humility when he sees a dozen cobwebs after he has burned up the dirt, put away the broom and sat down to read.

Besides, there are so many interesting signs left behind of what has gone on during the winter. In one place was a soap dish in which mice had held high carnival—the gnawed cake proof positive of the purity of the product. Under a divan was a tiny spot of chaff from a mattress, the first gnawing of a mattress

we have had in thirteen years of possession. A copy of the *Christian Century* was at hand to lay under the mattress and stop the leak until the Madame could come with needle and thread. Ignominious use to which to put our honored contemporary? Not at all. It was a year old. The editor ought to be proud to find his paper still capable of service. It was an entirely different thing when I found a copy of the *Christian Leader* the other day stuffed in the door of the private office of the General Superintendent to keep it from flying open. That was a different ox which was gored.

Fierce sweeping with a broom is fine exercise. It warms one up. Then one can cool off poking into the corners. And there are few jobs in life so perfect, so complete, as burning up the dirt. With a manuscript one always is thinking that he ought to revise, correct, change. Or if it is printed, he is thinking he might better have done so. But with a dust-pan of dirt dumped into a hot fire the thing is ended. There is one question settled. Nobody is going to pop up at the next meeting and move to reconsider.

There was time in the long afternoon for refreshing naps and for a little walk.

Usually we do not see the rarer birds until well on in our stay at the farm, but this afternoon we came upon the rose-breasted grosbeak just back of the big barn. There was a flash of black and white in some willows, then out he came—a beautiful adult male, followed by one of the young birds. He flew toward us, lighting near by in a sweet cherry tree. Standing perfectly still, we watched this beautiful creature picking cherries and feeding his clumsy, brownish, nondescript progeny. "Isn't this luck," said the Madame, "and on our first afternoon too?"

The great crested fly-catchers were hovering over the exact spot where we had left them the year

before. The yellow warblers and Maryland yellow-throats and goldfinches kept up a continual chatter and made flashes of gold all around us.

We did not go beyond the big meadow. There the ground was covered with ripe strawberries—enough for the birds and the neighbors and for us. There, too, the meadow larks broadcast all kinds of wild alarm notes, so that we knew that we must be near one of the nests. The thick grass was bright with daisies and buttercups and fragrant with both white and red clover.

At first we thought that it was a poor year for bobolinks. We saw none in the big meadow. The Madame had missed them in migration. It seemed as if she were to see none at all this year, but the next day we had a great experience with a pair, but that is a story for another time. Later on they were much in evidence.

I must say a word about the bluebirds, however. They are a common summer resident up in Schoharie County. We always see many of them at the farm, but this year one came down to the house and perched on a branch near the back door soon after our arrival. The Madame heard the soft plaintive note while she was setting the lunch table, and called me to see our little visitor.

A phrase from a European fairy story where there are no bluebirds has passed into a kind of proverb here: "The bluebird for happiness." But the bluebird was a favorite with us long before we imported the proverb. As Burroughs pointed out, he is "the first bit of color that cheers our northern landscape in the spring." The other birds arriving at the same time—sparrow, robin and phoebe—are gray or brown, but "the bluebird brings one of the primary hues and the divinest of them all."

Our evening meal, based on those old substantials,

steak and baked potatoes, comfortably over, and our few dishes quickly washed, we walked up to the high meadow again and sat down to enjoy the twilight. Fresh from city and village where motor cars are passing constantly, we were struck by the silence. To some, the silences of the remote country districts are full of gloom and foreboding. Such people can not be happy because they are lonely and apprehensive. But to those familiar with the country from childhood or educated up to it, to immerse oneself in sublime silences is like having a bath in a fountain of perpetual youth. It is not dead, empty silence —this silence we love. It is filled with interesting things—the crickets and whippoorwills, the frogs, the barking of a dog in the distance, the lowing of a cow, the rap, rap, rap, of a hammer far off in the hills, the voice of a man coming up the valley. The automobiles on the Summit pike, the freight trains on the Richmondville hill softened by distance, give us just enough connection with the great world outside to be welcome.

As we sat listening the entrancing song of the wood thrush and the spiral flute-like notes of the veery came down the mountain to us to mingle with the vesper song of the song sparrow, the faithful, honest calling of the robin, the "wichity, wichity, wichity," of our friendly Maryland yellow-throat, and a liquid note or two which we thought might be a good-night to us from the rose-breast.

When we lighted the lamp a little later in the kitchen and sat down by the grateful warmth of the big stove, by one of those rare coincidences we found on the editorial page of the *New York Times* which we had bought as we started a little poem, "Let Us Be Silent Now," by Barbara Young, just written for the day, the place, and the hour. It came as a benediction upon our first day at the farm:

Let us be silent now.
The night is still.
The wind lies down to sleep
On yonder hill.
The birds' last call
Has died into a dream.
The last far gleam
Has faded from the west.
A single star
Shines out, just where
The silver poplars are,
And close above them,
Low upon the sky.

Words do not feed
The hunger of the heart.
Let us depart
From words unto the silence
Of the night.
O men, O brothers,
How the stars are white!
How quiet are the stones
Beneath our feet;
The air, how still and sweet:
The blessed sky, how wide
And dark and blue,
And silent.
Let our hearts be silent, too.
And wait for some strange manna
That shall fall
To feed us all.

CHAPTER XLIV

A YEAR LATER

THE first morning at the farm we had breakfast in the big old kitchen on a drop-leaf table by the east window. The Madame brought out a black glass dish in which she had arranged buttercups and raspberry leaves the night before, and the morning sun coming in the window fell squarely on them. There were hundreds of other buttercups in the yard under the window nodding to us. It was a golden breakfast on a golden morning, and the buttercups symbolized it.

We have a little dining room at the farm, but we like to eat in the big old kitchen. The floor was once bright yellow and is still yellow in spots, and may be all yellow some day again. There is room in the kitchen for oil stove and coal range, a sink, an ice-box, three tables, two tall old pieces of furniture, one for china and the other for linen, and four or five chairs. The room has four doors and three windows and plenty of wall space besides. The catbird in the apple tree just outside the back door never stopped singing during breakfast—not under his breath as he so often sings in summer, but with full voice and with an inexhaustible variety of songs. The song sparrow helped, and the Maryland yellow-throat, or, rather, Northern yellow-throat, now and then chimed in.

Happy as we are usually at work, at play, traveling or tramping, reading or writing, there is an especial kind of happiness on the first day at "the little hill farm." When we arrived we saw at once that the wet June had left its mark. Stony Creek was making music, and not the usual little gurgle of July. There

was an extra stream coming down the road, and we heard the sound of rushing water back of the big barn, in the brook which almost always is just a rivulet. The season was late and the tall syringa bushes were still in bloom. The grass around the house was uncut, and was thick and deep. In it besides daisies and buttercups there were quantities of one of the mallows which some call wild geranium, the largest blossoms either of us had ever seen, and also great old damask roses and day lilies. The woodbine on the front porch, untrimmed, had outdone itself, and grass and foliage were so luxuriant that the house was partly hidden from the road.

It is fun immediately after arrival to go around quickly and see how buildings, trees and bushes have wintered. What has happened to the mulberry we planted a dozen years ago and which usually provides such a feast for the birds? At first sight it seems dead, but closer inspection shows new little leaves coming. Perhaps it has been badly nipped by frost! No, the woodpeckers have been working at it. That means some worm or insect. And what killed one of the purple beeches in the front yard? A thing which never changes winter or summer is the flowing spring, or artesian well, by the back door, and it has become a family custom to take a ceremonial drink of this wonderful water as soon as one arrives, "uncovered and facing the east." The bitterest winter weather never stops the flow. A marvelous ice stalagmite always is built up from the ground, but the 48 degree water steadily pushes its way out into the sub-zero air.

Starting up the hill by the barn toward the big high field, or meadow, which gives the place its name of "Highfield Farm," we find the road a flowing stream and a good half of the big meadow which we took such pains to drain twelve years ago a veritable

swamp. Never before have we had red-winged blackbirds up there. This year they are the main tenants. The bobolink was singing way off on the other side, and the meadow larks calling from the trees, but the red-wings flew up in all directions, making a great racket, telling us plainly they had nests and that we were intruders, acting as if the fact that we paid the taxes counted for nothing in proprietorship. In fact it does count little. Use and enjoyment count much more. But the red-wings need not have twitted us on it quite so pointedly. Strange that these swamp-loving birds should have moved into a dry meadow the one season when heavy rains have made it a kind of swamp.

Arriving in the early afternoon, the first thing is to get beds ready, clean out bureau drawers, burn up mouse nests, fill lamps, and put away food supplies. We found a note from my lawyer brother, bequeathing some honey to us, telling us to throw it out if we did not want it, and we made a great search for the honey, until examination of the paper which the note was written on and other deductions *a la* Sherlock Holmes brought us to the conclusion that the note was written last year and referred to honey long since disposed of. Wild strawberries picked in the orchard and wild strawberry jam brought up from Cobleskill, are a good substitute for honey. Both honey and wild strawberries are foods which stir the imagination. In them is the call of the country.

Our first morning at the farm we were up betimes to get the coffee going. Yes, gentle reader, we still warm and cheer our inner man with horrid devastating caffeine hidden in a beautiful hot amber liquid the aroma of which fills the house. It is astonishing how much longer it takes water to boil on a wood-burning range than on a gas stove, and how much quicker a teakettle will boil than a percolator will begin to

"perkle." I don't like percolators anyway, and usually when I make the coffee I do it the camp way in an old-fashioned pot or empty tomato can.

Our first walk on this first morning always will stand out, not because of a wild flower list or a bird list or any special incident, but just from the general impression—the sun on the hills and fields and on our backs as we went up the hill, the feel of the tall grass as we pushed through it, the smell and taste of the wild strawberries, the ceaseless music of the birds even in July, the beauty of the trees, the peaceful views as we gained the heights and sat down to rest. After long months away one welcomes everything, from old stone walls and blackberry thickets and even the pasture bars up to old Cobble Mountain smiling a welcome in the lovely morning light.

We had to get around the wet meadow to the upper fields, so we went behind the barn and followed that stream up. The catbird attended us, singing for all he was worth. A little wren helped him. We went up an old lane for cows, with the wet meadow full of buttercups on one side, a timothy meadow on the other. At the steep field recently reforested we climbed the fence to see the young trees. Now one can see them without a great search. For two or three years it was hard to find them in the grass. There are Scotch pine, white pine and spruce, and the Scotch pine lead all the rest in growth. Sturdy, thrifty little trees, given to us by the State of New York, they will be a forest before we know it. The grass, the berry bushes, the wild flowers, even the young deciduous trees which threatened to choke them, little by little will disappear. The day will come when those who climb this hill at this point will tread on pine needles. The Madames of that day will not tear their stockings on the briers.

In the high pasture which extends up to the

woods, the sweet-brier rose was in bloom. Usually it is past its meridian when we come. On the little hill farm no thrifty farmer cuts it down. Our orders are that such beauty spots must be spared. When a forest is started in the high pasture the sweet-brier will have to concentrate on vacant land along stone walls and in fence corners where it already is well started. The sparrows, field, vesper, chipping, and song, flit from one sweet-brier bush to another, usually making music as they go. There are few odors of the country in which are concentrated so many memories as in the sweet-brier. For those who never have seen it let me say that it is a prickly bush which grows from six to twelve feet high, and late in June in this latitude produces hundreds of small, single pink blossoms. Stem, leaf and flower have a wild, delicious fragrance. In damp places the elder does well, and we caught this also in bloom. As an old friend, a bank president of Cobleskill, remarked: "Few folks realize what a wonderful ornamental bush the elder is, whether in blossom or with the fruit on it. And in this part of the country it does well."

In this upper pasture we usually sit down in sun or shade and enjoy the view. We are on the back of a vast natural amphitheater. Some of the slopes are wooded. The way up to this bowl is the road from Cobleskill, down which we can look for several miles. The way out is the steep road past our place to Summit.

Here we took note of the trees. It was surprising to see how many butternuts and hickories there were. We might better have named the place "Hickory Farm." And, appropriately enough, every owner of the place, so far as we know, has been a Democrat, actively or constructively. The difference between the early owners and the late owners is that the first

were strong on practise and weak on theory, and the present owners are strong on Democratic theory and rather lax in practise. When both great parties nominate good democrats whom one respects and likes, one is rather put to it to know what to do. The straight, strong, simple shagbark hickory is a fine party emblem. Strange that the opposition has not made more use of the fact that in the hickory family there are "bitternuts," "pignuts" and "mockernuts."

One denizen of the farm we could dispense with, but we have quantities of it—poison ivy. The wet season has caused a tremendous growth of it. Until I was forty I handled it with impunity. Then I took pickaxe and spade to root out several old vines which had poisoned the children. In that way I poisoned myself badly, and this broke down my immunity. Since then I have been sensitive to it. Usually by washing arms and legs with strong soap after a walk I get rid of the oily gum which makes the trouble. But on a tramp in Brookline this year, when overheated, I carelessly threw myself down on the ground in a dark shady place without looking, and got a bad dose of it. The one sure antidote for the bite of a rattlesnake is about the only thing strong enough to tussle with poison ivy. Authorities say that if you have a few crystals of permanganate of potash in your pocket and rub them in a rattlesnake bite immediately, it will end the trouble. A solution of these crystals applied to poison ivy has the fight of its life on hand, but in a day or two usually dries up the blisters. My army brother says that poison ivy cases are hospital cases, where the parts affected are swathed and bandaged to keep the trouble from spreading. The one debate I have had with the Madame was over going straight into poison ivy again after a bad attack. But that is what I have insisted on doing. "I will take every precaution," I declared

on the Fourth of July, "but my personal liberty must not be curtailed." This is not so foolish as it sounds. We ought not to surrender to evils, but eradicate them or control them. Eventually we shall exterminate this beautiful but dangerous vine or control its ravages.

There are two great rules for dealing with poison ivy or rattlesnakes or white sumach or crocodiles, or any other plant or animal liable to make trouble:

1. Find out all there is to be known about it, and live up to what you know.

2. Go straight ahead and do not be afraid. Far better be ended at sixty by a rattlesnake than live on to seventy in fear of snakes or deprived of the joy of tramping the fields and climbing the hills.

On this first night at the little hill farm something woke me at 3.30 a. m., an exceptional thing, for I am a sound sleeper. The moonlight was flooding the room. I went to the kitchen door and listened. The catbird that had sung all the afternoon, and which had been singing when we went to bed, was singing softly in the elder bush where its mate and its little ones were safely tucked away. It just could not hold back its song of gladness.

At daybreak I went again. From the upper meadow straight out over the valley came four bobolinks, some of them singing. They flew toward the rising sun, and then curved back over us and settled down behind the apple trees, their song coming back softened by distance. A rite, a ceremony, so it seemed —obeisance to the sun god, music for the break of day.

Beards Hollow, above Richmondville, N. Y., July 7, 1928.

CHAPTER XLV

A BIRD FOR THE LIFE LIST

THE narrow person getting interested in some special study often lets it crowd out everything else. The broader, better-balanced person makes it contribute to the enrichment of the normal, every-day life.

There are some things most of us have to think about beside birds or butterflies, spiders, or even pink lady slippers. To go through the most exquisite glen, where the sun falls in patches on the dark ground or lights up some mossy rock, and have no eyes except for the flutter of a wing is to miss something. But on the other hand to go through that same glen and sit on that same rock and be perfectly oblivious of the hermit thrush singing a little way off, or at most to think of it "just as a bird," is to miss something, too.

While there are the intense high-strung naturalists who think of little but another check mark to put down against something they have seen, the vast majority of people who love nature have broader interests. They are good universalists in the non-sectarian use of the word, which is the greater use, of course. They know that "all things" are theirs if they are capable of possessing them.

In the days when I thought of an interest in birds as rather effeminate, rather beneath a busy man, I was greatly devoted to camping, tramping, fishing, gardening, farming, whenever I had a chance. In those days Burroughs came into my life through his books and showed me that the study of ornithology is not a competing interest but goes along with these other things. His last chapter in "Wake Robin,"

called "The Invitation," written nearly sixty years ago, obsolete in some respects, has been responsible for more people taking up the study of birds probably than any other chapter ever written. "In all excursions to the woods or the shore," he says, "the student of ornithology has an advantage over his companions. He has one more resource, one more avenue of delight. . . . Audubon on the desolate waste of Labrador is happier than any king ever was; and on shipboard is nearly cured of his sea-sickness when a new gull appears in sight. . . . It fits so well with other things—with fishing, hunting, farming, walking, camping out—with all that takes one to the fields and woods. One may go a blackberrying and make some rare discovery; or while driving his cow to pasture hear a new song or make a new observation. Secrets lurk on every side. There is news in every bush."

To-day the shooting of specimens which Burroughs recommended is no longer advised. On the contrary we realize keenly what men like Ditmars tell us about "Our Vanishing Wild Life." We are doing our best to stop casual, wanton, useless slaughter of birds and some of the killing which is not without a useful object, if it means extermination of a species.

From reading Burroughs I gained the idea of a great drama going on in nature all around us, behind a curtain, and of the fascinating peeps we get behind the scenes in our walks. That is all they are—just peeps.

That rose-breasted grosbeak, about which I wrote a week ago, feeding sweet cherries to his oldest son, the woodchuck coming out of the deep grass near the well, sitting up an instant and disappearing, the chipmunk eating peanuts on the cellar door, the humming-bird on the syringa bush, the wasp on the damp spot by the brook, the rabbit coming up to us at nightfall as we sat by the back door, and sitting up

to lick his paws and wash his face, oblivious of our presence, all these are but a few of the many actors in stream and orchard and pasture and woods about which we know little compared with what there is to know.

I remember Burroughs telling of the deep impression made upon him as a boy when he lay on the ground in the woods with his brothers, thinking of the birchbark and wintergreens they had been gathering and gazing vaguely up in the trees, when he saw a bird unlike any he had ever seen before—one of the warblers, probably. He saw it only an instant before it was gone. "But," said he, "how the thought of it clung to me afterward. It was a revelation. It was the first intimation I had had that the woods we knew so well held birds we knew not at all. Were our eyes and ears so dull then? There was the robin, the bluejay, the bluebird, the yellowbird, the cherry bird, the catbird, the chipping bird, the woodpecker, the high-hole, an occasional redbird, and a few others in the woods or along their borders, but who ever dreamed that there were still others that not even the hunters saw, and whose names no one had ever heard?"

That kind of incident is a turning point in the life of boy or man.

For years now I have been keeping my eyes open for little peeps behind the scenes in nature. Those that I get give a new zest and interest to life. It is a great thing for boys and girls in school to have planted in their minds early some idea of the enormous number of fascinating things in nature going on around them that they never see, and the surprising number that they can see if they only keep their eyes open.

The man at the farm made an illuminating remark the other day. He said, "There are so many more birds coming around now than there used to be." The illuminating thing is not the fact he stated, for

probably it is not a fact. It is his mental state. The Madame has been after him for some time about this bird or that, asking where she might see them, and with the naturally keen powers of observation of country people he has been keeping his eyes open for the distinguishing marks and calls she has described. Of course there are more birds for him than there used to be. He has been peeping behind the scenes.

One of the birds the Madame has been asking about ever since we began going to the farm is the great northern pileated woodpecker. In the wild country around the farm this fast disappearing bird still survives. My brother quickened our interest by telling us that he once saw this great woodpecker on a tree in the orchard, "big as a crow," "making the chips fly," "with a wild cry you can hear a mile," "black and white with a wonderful red topknot." Last year we spent several hours in a deep gorge looking for him. The farmer said he lived "up in the gulch winters," and used the same figure my brother had—"big as a crow." But though we looked patiently we neither saw him nor heard him.

If we could see him we both would have a new bird for the life list.*

Would we ever see the great northern pileated? It seemed doubtful. Yet he came as a climax to our walk the morning after our arrival, when we were least expecting him, when we had practically stopped thinking about him, in a place entirely different from the one we had been told that he frequented.

The walk, however, is worth describing. Let even

---

*A little book distributed by my friend, Dr. T. S. Palmer, of the Biological Survey in Washington, for the American Ornithological Union, and sold for thirty cents. It has a list of all the birds, properly classified, and a place to check those seen at least once in a lifetime.

the great northern pileated wait for his curtain call.

As we opened the kitchen door the bluebird sang for us. In the same cherry tree where we had seen him before sat the rose-breast. A pair of great crests sailed above our heads as we turned up by the barn, and the phoebe, always in evidence this year, stopped fly-catching for a moment to cock her soft head inquiringly as if passing the time of day.

The walk was across the broad meadow, gay with daisies and buttercups, to the steep hill pasture beyond. At the pasture fence we sat down to bask in the warm sunshine and to sniff all kinds of delicious odors. The warmth of the sun surprised us. We had slept under double blankets and a down quilt. In addition in the night I had reached for my old overcoat, which in many a sleeping car and steamboat cabin has sent me back to sleep by making me warm. The first thing I had done on getting up was to build two roaring fires, one to dress by and one to cook by. But by the time we reached the pasture the sun was warm, and by the time we were half-way up the steep slope the sun was hot.

Half-way up the hill, on the top of a tall tree and at the top end of a bare limb, sat the indigo bunting. We would have gone by without seeing him if we had not heard his song. He, too, was on the same tree where we have seen him so often in years past. That is one of the secrets of this bird business, knowing the places which they frequent. From the wilds of South or Central America they come thousands of miles to the same remote farm and the same old tree.

One bush of the sweet brier had climbed into a wild apple tree and lo, we had an apple tree bearing a crop of the sweetest roses that blow.

The main object of the walk was to show the Madame the upper end of the farm which she had never seen, the wilder, steeper wood, the rocky cliffs

in the woods, the haunts of the ferns which she loves so well, and possibly the ruffed grouse or partridge, her favorite wood thrush and maybe the rare hermit thrush. None of these birds appeared on this walk—as so often happens—but we had all the rest of it and much more.

Before entering the woods we sat down to rest from our stiff climb and to get the views. Some of our favorite far views began to show up. We could look over the little hamlet of Beards Hollow with its church and schoolhouse—down the entire length of the valley, and the valley of the Cobleskill beyond, and even see a little of the high hills across the Mohawk. It was a lovely panorama of farm and forest—hill farms and valley farms—mowing-machines at many a green hillside, and tiny little cattle in many a distant field. The more distant the cattle the better they suit the Madame. If this sane, sensible person has any complexes, it is a cow complex. We have to lay every course to keep a fence between us and the fierce man-eating cows. But the Madame was a trump, the way she made the stiff climb. Pulling ourselves up by trees and bushes, we penetrated the lairs of the ferns—the sensitive, the Christmas, the New York, and the beautiful maidenhair fern. On the upper level of the woods we also came upon masses of jewelweed, which I have often pushed through in damp places on our mountains but which the Madame has always associated exclusively with water courses in the valleys. There seemed to be few birds in the woods, but again it was a case of a dropped curtain. More than one curious or timid pair of eyes watched our progress—raccoon, fox, squirrel, woodchuck, chipmunk, warbler, or perhaps even deer and bobcat, for all are here. More than one wild creature scurried out of our way. When we sat down again on a level place in a dense growth of maple and beech, the bird

glasses came almost instantly into play. A beautiful little ovenbird flirted with us and fooled us before he consented to come out and work back and forth along an old rotten log. A Canadian warbler fed its young for us—so close that we could see its greeny back, yellow breast and black necklace with pendants. A lady redstart came almost up to us. With thrushes on our mind, we lingered long to run down an unusual alarm note, but the woods were too thick. Coming out at last into the beautiful sunshine, we scared up a scarlet tanager at the edge of the woods. Here was the neighbor "who joined us" on the top of the hill. He was a new owner and wanted light on our boundary line and I promised to send up a brother who knew. His old father-in-law, hoeing in the garden, came up to the fence to talk about fifty-five years ago when my father was School Commissioner just starting the practise of law. Here it seemed as if we could look almost straight down into our hollow, and toss a stone on our buildings.

We re-laid our course on this commanding height to avoid the woods and go home by meadow and pasture. Following a single track through our neighbor's high meadow, all at once we saw a brownish bird rise rather heavily up out of the grass and fly to a tree top. "Female bobolink," I opined. I was right for once. An instant later came the male which every country boy knows—black with beautiful golden hackle on his neck—and poised in his characteristic way, uttering alarm cries, above the spot where the lady had risen, where undoubtedly the nest was hidden in the grass. We were just putting our glasses on the male bobolink which had lighted near by when the Madame excitedly exclaimed, "What is that?" A big bird was flying across our path a little way down the hill. "Crow?" one asked. "Hawk?" the other asked. "No," said the Madame excitedly. "I be-

lieve it is the pileated. See how much white there is on his wings." The gods were propitious and the great bird lighted on the side of a big hickory, giving his wild cry twice. There was no doubt now. His red crest stood up like a lighthouse. (Is not such exaggeration pardonable under these circumstances?) His beautiful black and white markings were plainly visible. He attacked the tree like a woodchopper. We watched him for some time flying from tree to tree.

"I feel as if some one had made me a valuable present," said the Madame. "Isn't that the way, when you least expect it, something like this happens? I'd rather see him than any other bird up here. But I had completely forgotten him."

At first we thought that the pileated was far away from where we had gone to look for him the year before; but in a moment we saw that this was not true. We were on the rim of a deep bowl in which are Beards Hollow and our farm, and the gorge or gulch in which the great woodpecker is supposed to live runs out of one side of that bowl.

At any rate, it was event enough for one day. We sat down and talked it over. Then when we reached home the Madame found a picture and a description of the bird. The lumbermen call him "the log cock." The farmers in some sections call him the "cock of the woods." He is a bird of the woods, "found only where there are rather extensive tracts of timber," "a shy, retiring bird difficult to approach." Chester Reed's little bird book said succinctly: "Next to the ivory-bills these are the largest of our woodpeckers." Since we heard Professor Allen of Cornell lecture recently on his experiences searching for the ivory-bills in Florida we are afraid that we will have to say, soon at any rate, that the ivory bills are gone—shot out of existence—and that the pileated is the largest one left. One is nineteen inches, and the

other seventeen, so that there is not much difference between them in size.

Both are such strikingly beautiful birds that almost every hunter tries to bring them down. One of the reports of the New York State Forest, Fish and Game Commission issued in 1903 said: "The scarcity of this species (the pileated) in most parts of the country renders it such an object of curiosity that it is usually shot on sight by hunters or by anybody who happens to have a gun with him. This should not be allowed. The bird is not fit for food and there is no possible use to which its body can be put after its death, while when alive it is one of the most valuable conservators of the forest."

It will be many a long day before we forget the lifting of the curtain on that beautiful July morning to let us see the great northern pileated go through his part.

We saw twenty-five species on the walk, which was rather good for July: the rose-breasted grosbeak, the phoebe, the robin, the bluebird, the indigo bunting, the field, song, and chipping sparrows, the goldfinch, the ovenbird, Maryland yellow-throat, yellow warbler, Canadian warbler, the redstart, the great crested flycatcher, the meadow-lark, the bobolink, the blue jay, the scarlet tanager, the crow, the flicker, the cliff swallow, the red-eyed vireo, the kingbird and the great northern pileated woodpecker. To that we added on a walk the next morning, the nuthatch, downy woodpecker, humming-bird, cedar waxwing, catbird, chickadee, ruffed grouse, the barn swallow, house wren, black and white warbler, and red-winged blackbird. Others seen a day or two later were the black-throated blue warbler, the junco, the wren and the pewee.

Oddly enough here is a list on which the purple grackle, the starling and the English sparrow do not appear.

CHAPTER XLVI

SOME OF THE COMMON WEEDS

"REALLY," I remarked to the Madame as we sauntered slowly down the country road, "I am more interested in agrimony than I am in who won the Dempsey fight."

They had been joking us at Cobleskill about starting off for the farm on the very day of the big battle. The others were to get the returns over the radio. Those who went to Cherry Valley for the sesquicentennial were to hear about the battle round by round. The advertising played up the Dempsey-Sharkey fight more than it did the battle they were celebrating. But I was deliberately preferring agrimony to pugilism.

Now what is agrimony? Here is Chester Reed's definition: "It is a common weed found on the borders of swamps or thickets," "tall simple hairy stem from two to four feet high," "the flowers in a long, many-flowered spike at the top of the stalk," "each flower with five yellow petals and numerous orange stamens."

Instead of agrimony, I might have said "coneflower," or "musk mallow," or "evening primrose," or any one of a dozen new wild flowers which I identified at the farm this year. The Madame knows most of them, but I never have made much effort to add to those I learned as a boy or even to correct some of the incorrect names I applied to them at that time.

Daisies, buttercups, several kinds of clover, dandelions, wild roses, violets, wild carrot, wild parsnip, mayflowers, everlasting, elecampane, berry-blossoms, goldenrod, thistle, burdock, mustard, catnip

and tansy, were about all that we could have named when we were growing up.

To many people it seems a stupid waste of time to study plants and flowers.

In the fourth chapter of First Kings, it says: "He spake of trees, from the cedar of Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall."

In "A Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf," John Muir describes a conversation with a farmer in the Cumberland Mountains, with whom he sought shelter for the night.

" 'Young man,' said the farmer, 'what you doing down here?' I replied that I was looking at plants. 'Plants? What kind of plants?' I said, 'Oh, all kinds; grass, weeds, flowers, trees, mosses, ferns—almost everything that grows is interesting to me.'

" 'Well, young man,' he queried, 'you mean to say that you are not employed by the Government on some private business?' 'No,' I said, 'I am not employed by any one except just myself. I love all kinds of plants, and I came down here to these southern states to get acquainted with as many of them as possible.'

" 'You look like a strong-minded man,' he replied, 'and surely you are able to do something better than wander over the country and look at weeds and blossoms. These are hard times, and real work is required of every man that is able. Picking up blossoms doesn't seem to be a man's work at all in any kind of times.'

"To this I replied, 'You are a believer in the Bible, are you not?'

" 'Oh, yes.'

" 'Well, you know Solomon was a strong-minded man, and he is generally believed to have been the very wisest man the world ever saw, and yet he considered it was worth while to study plants; not only

to go and pick them up as I am doing, but to study them; and you know we are told that he wrote a book about plants, not only of the great cedars of Lebanon, but of little bits of things growing in the cracks of the walls.' "

"What do you want to know the names for?" one lady remarked to the Madame. "Are they not just as beautiful without naming them?" "Yes," replied the Madame, "but they are like people. One does not come close to them until one learns their names and a little about them. It puts them on a different footing. Eventually when you meet them, it is like meeting old friends."

Later that very day we were reading aloud a chapter in "Riverby," by John Burroughs, and to our delight we came upon this paragraph:

> "Most young people find botany a dull study. So it is as taught from the text books in the schools. (Burroughs would have changed this had he seen some of the nature work of our best elementary schools.) But study it yourself in the fields and woods and you will find it a source of perennial delight. Find your flower and then name it by the aid of the botany. There is so much in a name. To find out what a thing is called is a great help. It is the beginning of knowledge; it is the first step. When we see a new person who interests us we wish to know his or her name. A bird, a flower, a place—the first thing we wish to know about it is its name. Its name helps us to classify it; it gives us a handle to grasp it by; it sheds a ray of light where all before was darkness. As soon as we know the name of a thing we have established some sort of relation with it."

For a long time I have wanted to know all the trees, all the different kinds of grasses, all the mosses, at least some of the insects and all the wild flowers. Never, I felt sure, would I let an interest in these special things interfere with my major nature in-

terest, "the large spirit of open air nature," as Burroughs calls it—the general outlines, the forest as a whole, the streams, the mountains, the valleys, the near views and the far views—the sense of the presence of Mother Nature.

And I have found that one's enjoyment of things in general is not lessened by some knowledge of things in special.

I shall not soon forget that motor trip from Washington to the Beltsville bogs, where some wild flower experts took us to see the "Calopogan," and the "Pogonia," two exquisite pink orchids. Unless I go to see them again, I probably shall forget them, but at least I shall remember that they exist. And when I do meet them again, it will not be as an entire stranger.

In our trips with the Audubon Society in Washington, we stop many a time to examine some plant or tree. On the few times I have gone on the nature walks of the Twentieth Century Club in Washington, the interest in flowers has been as deep as interest in birds. They proudly boast that they can find something blooming around the District of Columbia every month of the year. But I always maintain that in hard winters they keep the record straight by falling back on skunk cabbage in one specially sheltered wet place in Arlington Cemetery.

On the first bird walk which we took with the Brookline Bird Club, we stopped in a beautiful part of the woods to see the pink lady slipper, now almost extinct.

The Madame, too, is always calling my attention to some new flower or some old flower which I never have noticed, and gradually I have been growing interested.

On a short bird walk along the Cobleskill Creek, we kept track of the wild flowers we saw that we could

name. We had this list: wild parsnip, milkweed, Canada thistle, Queen Anne's lace, which I knew by the common name of wild carrot, morning glory, buttercup, daisies, mustard, bouncing-bet or soapwort, Saint John's-wort, yarrow or dusty miller, blue vervain, Joe-pye-weed, self-heal, white clover, red clover, white sweet clover, yellow sweet clover or yellow melilot, another milkweed we did not identify and a mint which the Madame looked up and found to be motherwort.

John Mahar, the flagman at the railroad crossing near where we went, has a beautiful little flower garden on a bit of unused land near the tracks. Among his pansies we found a dainty creeping vine with yellow flowers which he said was wild. The Madame identified it as moneywort, or European myrtle. He had some striking calendula, foxglove, straw flowers. "I want something pretty to look at while I am here all day at my work," he said.

Fifty-four years has John Mahar been working for the railroad, but a more enthusiastic lover of flowers it would be hard to find. He guards a dangerous grade crossing just at a bend of the Cobleskill Creek. Our largest colony of bank swallows is at his "back door," and in the depth of winter, when there are no flowers to tend between trains, he feeds the ring-neck pheasants which live in the thickets along the stream.

Up at the farm on the twenty-second of July, we made the acquaintance of the dainty little flower of the partridge-berry blooming in the depth of the woods. Every country-bred boy knows the berries. Few take the trouble to look for the blossoms. By the edge of the woods we found the European nightshade, called bittersweet in the books.

One advantage of going for vacation to "the little hill farm" is in the way that nature crowds up to the

very doorstep. The dooryard is mowed the very last of the haying and our wild flower friends are all about us. As I write these words I note from the study window, for we boast a study at the farm, whole beds of muskmallow in the tall grass near the house, with buttercups and clover. I can see a maple tree starting in the corner of the house and a blackberry vine by the steps which we no longer use near the side door of the kitchen. In a circle around the artesian well, bathed by the spray first on one side and then on the other as the wind changes, we have a natural bed of gill-over-the-ground, or ground ivy. Closer inspection would give one a long list of interesting things if one but knew them.

How much there is in having one's eyes opened to things. Every year that I go into the country I get glimpses I have never had before—peeps behind the curtain at the great drama of nature. It may be a book, a lecture, or the chance remark of a friend, which sets me looking, but once a person begins to pay attention he will be rewarded by a whole host of things he might have seen at any time if he only had looked.

The difference between studying birds and flowers is that the birds come and go, but the flowers stay put. The birds may come to you if you sit quietly, but they may give you only the most fleeting look at their charms. The flowers live out their little lives in the same spot, and if you only know the spot you may look at them as much as you choose.

But that is not the whole story. The flowers are much more helpless against despoilers. To kill birds one has to be able to shoot or climb. To pull up the flowers requires neither strength nor skill. Thus it has come about that we have had to organize societies to protect wild flowers. On the bird walks or other nature walks, we can tell the beginners by their picking

any flower that takes their fancy. Public sentiment is against picking the flowers like arbutus or pink lady slipper or laurel, which are in danger of extinction, or picking blossoms like dogwood where the beauty of the woods is spoiled for the next visitor, or picking any flowers or breaking any branches which die before you take them home.

There are wild flowers on which the farmers wage unrelenting warfare. The common white daisy is one. A species of hawkweed called locally the devil's paint brush is another. Gardeners do their best to keep dandelions and self-heal out of the lawns. Dock and burdock and mullein bear testimony to poor soil or poor farming. We sympathize with the good farmer who wants to make his acres pay and to support his family. But the little hill farm is set apart for simple experiments in forestry. It is largely dedicated to what will spring up. And the study of what does spring up is one of the great joys of vacation.

On the day that I declared myself on agrimony, the farmer came by in the afternoon and told us about the Dempsey fight. He lives higher up on the mountain than we do, but he has a radio and gets the news. Round by round the story of that battle eddied and swirled through the air and climbed up into our valley.

With the agrimony, and the day lilies, and the rose-breasted grosbeak and the bees, we were fast asleep. It is rather good to get away from the news and one's own sense of responsibility for the making and unmaking of dynasties, and to concentrate for a while on some of the beautiful things with which God has clothed the world, even if we find them classified in the books as common weeds.

For a year now I have been walking in frequently from my residence at Longwood Towers, to my office near Copley Square, Boston. The first part of the

walk is down the winding Muddy River or Riverway to the Fenway.

For several squares after leaving the Fenway one passes a series of vacant lots twelve or fourteen feet below the level of the street and adorned here and there with billboards, used in places as a dump, and grown up to weeds and bushes. In all this time I have never seen the beauty of the dump, I have never seen the things growing there except as a green mass out of which once I scared the ring-necked pheasant. After the visit to the little hill farm, when I began to examine the wild flowers with more care, I found myself looking at these vacant lots with new eyes. I could say, "Whereas I was blind, now I can see."

Passing along casually and noticing things from the street, the first morning after my vacation, I saw these many flowers: wild rose, spirea, chicory, everlasting, tansy, bouncing-bet, white clover, elecampane and sweet clover so tall that I could just reach to the top of it, which means that it had a height of eight feet, hairbells, Canada thistle, milkweed, the first of the goldenrods, the blossoms of the elder and the dark red fruit of the sumach. I must admit that there was burdock and ragweed also and both bushes and plants I did not know. Some of the flowers were massed together in attractive ways. Some stood blooming alone. But it was intensely interesting to study these lots which I had always regarded as so lonely and desolate and to find how interesting they were. To me they had been waste ground. All at once they had become a garden. It made me wonder how many things there are to which my eyes are closed, what wonders of nature, what beauties of human nature, what glories of literature and art, what delight in work, what joys of the religious life, still hidden. The man or book or trip that helps open our eyes makes life a different thing for us.

A gifted correspondent in Maryland, Bertha Gerneaux Woods, recently sent to the *Christian Leader* a little poem entitled, "Friends," which renders this kind of service.

Blazing star, and Creeping Charley,
Poppies springing through the barley,
  Cranebill where the ground is wet.
Star-eyed chickweed, white, in masses,
Self-heal, sorrel, blue-eyed grasses,
  Ragged Robin, Bouncing Bet.

Jewel-weed and crimson clover—
How I love to name them over—
  Black-eyed Susan, like a flame;
Fire-weed and yellow daisies,
It is joy to sing their praises—
  There's a lilt in every name.

CHAPTER XLVII

WHEN THE SWALLOWS LEAVE THE NEST

SOME of our best cruising is from an easy chair. On the front porch at the farm looking off southward toward Cobble and Pine Mountains, or outside the kitchen looking down the valley or along the ridge to the north, we find many things worth noticing. Besides, the wild creatures come to us when we keep still.

This year when we reached the farm the barn swallows were just leaving the nest. Our attention was first attracted by two of the young birds beating their wings furiously against a window in the peak of the cow barn, and we were sure that they were imprisoned and would die. But investigation showed that our sympathy was wasted. The loft of the cow barn opened into the loft of the big barn and there high up on the beams were the nests of these interesting birds. The little fellows were just trying out their wings.

The next day one of them was outside on a window ledge. Evidently he flew there, but just as evidently he did not propose to do any more flying until he had to. The old birds were giving one of their characteristic exhibitions, darting around and around, dipping, rising, curving, getting their evening meal of insects in the air. Every little while one of them would stop at the window ledge long enough to feed the youngster, but that was not long. Nor is "stop" the right word. It was more like the Fast Mail passing Spraker's Basin and throwing off the mail bags. But the youngster was ready and his wings began to flutter when the parent bird was some

distance away. Nor did his fluttering wings which signaled "stop" always halt the fast-flying mother. Perhaps she had only half a beakful, and would not stop for that.

An even more interesting thing happened twice directly above our heads. Two swallows seemed to meet and hover an instant in full flight—a parent feeding a youngster on the wing. Burroughs in his chapter on "Gilbert White's Book" says, "He (White) saw swallows feed their young in the air, which few people have perhaps ever seen." Quite apart from the charm of style or the facts in a book like Gilbert White's "Natural History of Selborne," or Burroughs' "Indoor Studies," where he discusses White, it is interesting to note what small matters have significance to these two naturalists separated by over 200 years. It is a great pleasure to see something for one's self and then find reference to it and confirmation of it in some author whom one loves.

To many people swallows are swallows and swifts are swallows also, and they throw up their hands at the idea of trying to identify the different species. I must confess that I sympathize with such folks, for I belonged to them until a comparatively recent time. The swallow darts here and there so quickly that it is almost impossible to get the markings. As for confusing swifts with swallows, in all the older writers, Burroughs also, chimney swifts were called chimney swallows. Studies, however, in the structure of the birds compelled scientists to put swifts in the "order" with night hawks, humming birds and whip-poor-wills, and swallows in the great order of perching birds.

The first peg I got to hang a distinction on was the difference between the short, chopped-off tail of the swift and the long tail of the swallow. This encouraged me to listen for the note of the swift—a

THE SITTING ROOM AT THE FARM

"rolling twitter" which is not easily forgotten when it is once mastered. By the hundred sometimes, swifts dart down a disused chimney by clinging to the inside wall and supporting themselves with the spine-pointed tail.

Of true swallows there are eighty species distributed over the world, but seventy-four of them I have definitely marked off my ledger and have opened accounts for just six—barn, tree, cliff or eave, bank, rough-winged and the purple martin. The others may go hang (or fly if they prefer) until I get these straight. What saves the day in the swallow business are the telegraph or telephone lines. Here these swift-moving birds sometimes will come to rest. Many a recent trip from Cobleskill to the Little Hill Farm has been a lesson on swallows. Letting "foreheads" and "crowns" and "sides of head" and "neck rings" go for the time being, I concentrate on breast and belly. If the bird sits right on the wire I can at least see that. And the barn swallow has a chestnut rufous breast, reddish brown I call it, and none of the others on my list have, except that the cliff swallow has a washing of rufous on his breast. So as I sit in the back yard, because of the chestnut breast and long, forked tail, and because they dart in and out of the barn door, I know our nearest swallow neighbors are barn swallows.

I am glad to have Chapman say: "Barn swallows take first rank among a family of birds famous for their power of flight. While their relatives are circling about feeding on insects in the air above, they capture their prey nearer the ground, skimming low over the fields, turning quickly to right or left, up or down, and pursuing their erratic course with marvelous ease and grace."

Driving up to the farm we almost always see tree swallows also sitting on the telephone wires. It

must have been tree swallows that Longfellow meant when he wrote:

"The swallow is come!
The swallow is come!
O, fair are the seasons and light
Are the days that she brings,
With her dusky wings
And her bosom snowy white."

It is that snowy-white bosom which stands out with the tree swallow. One of the names of this species is white-bellied swallow. In "Sand Dunes and Salt Marshes" Townsend tells how one can see thousands of these birds in the marshes near Ipswich.

In many places along the Atlantic Coast they furnish the same spectacle—scattering far and wide to feed by day and coming back to the marshes to roost at night. This species loves the bayberry, and in times of migration may be found in large numbers in these bushes.

"I once found forty-one of these large berries," says Townsend, "in the small alimentary tract of a tree swallow. As far as I know this is the only species of swallow that enjoys such an unusual diet, for insects of course are the swallows' favorite prey."

On our drives to the farm we have learned to look for cliff swallows or eave swallows around one old hop house on the right of the road. The air generally is full of them and the building is plastered on all sides with their curious pocket-shaped nests of mud. Some years we have been early enough to see them dipping into the mud holes near the old building for the "concrete" which they use in building.

Chapman explains what we have wondered at, why these birds are not found in more places in the same region. He says that during the nesting season they are of very local distribution. I hate to reflect upon the road commissioner of the town of Summit,

but truth compels me to say that this nesting place is just over the town line between Richmondville and Summit and near the worst mud holes of the seven mile trip. We have complained bitterly to this road commissioner. We have threatened suit against the town for turning the stream which runs down the steep road in every rain storm off into one of our fields. We have promised ourselves to rally the voters of the "Hollow" and go up to town meeting and clean house. But now we feel better about it. We see that the road commissioner is a naturalist. He realized that these beautiful birds had to have mud out of which to make pellets for their building. He left the mud holes for the swallows, and so that we might enjoy the spectacle. We will try to rally the voters to keep him in office and go on washing our car after every trip.

For the bank swallows I have a special feeling of proprietorship. They are the ones that I see along the Cobleskill creek in the old home town and nowhere else. They are widely distributed all over the United States, but can be seen only where sand banks offer a favorable place for them to make the tunnels and caves in which they breed. As a little boy, fishing along the Cobleskill creek, I well remember their darting almost under my feet into the bank on which I was standing. One time the bank caved in and I found myself down at the edge of the water with two naked little birds which had gone down with me. Walt Hurst, one of the big boys, came along and said, "bank swallows." A little while later I was calling loudly for Walt again, for I had a queer, fierce-looking fish on my hook, perhaps three or four inches long with wicked horns on his head. Walt came and took him off, merely muttering "bullhead." I was a proud boy to have caught a "bullhead." As I think back I laugh at my altered perspective. The bullhead has receded into the background and the poor, naked

little birds, victims of a home-made earthquake, have come into the foreground.

Every time that we go to Cobleskill in summer I have to drive the Madame down to the Cobleskill creek to see bank swallows. It is the only place that we see them. There is one colony along the creek a mile east of the village where "the lower red bridge" used to stand. Here in a space of fifty or sixty feet I counted upward of a hundred holes. The railroad from Albany at this point parallels the stream, and from the train we almost always get a glimpse of these swallows. Old John Mahar, who guards the crossing, watches over the wild flowers and the birds, cultivates his own little flower garden, feeds the ring-neck pheasants in winter, and indulges in interesting reminiscences about Cobleskill when he was a boy. Thousands see him, but they are in fast-moving motors or trains on a down grade and few ever stop. But every season the swallows come and go. The last time we were there a beautiful blue-bird sat on the wire just above John's shanty and sang for us.

The bank swallow is the smallest of the swallows that I know. It can be identified by a brownish gray band across a brownish gray breast, but I identify it by where it is and by seeing it go apparently at sixty miles an hour straight into the side of the bank.

On a trip to Cobleskill about July 4, 1928, we found the young bank swallows also about ready to come from the nest. They were sitting at the entrance of their burrows sticking their heads out of the holes, watching the unending flight for food and absorbing unbelievable quantities caught by the tireless parents. In one hole we noticed two little heads looking out intently.

The *Auk*, a quarterly journal of the American Ornithologists' Union (the organized savants of orni-

thology), has been publishing some "Observations and Banding Notes on the Bank Swallow," a work that has been going on since 1923 at the Iowa Lakeside Laboratory in northwestern Iowa. Dayton Stoner of the State University of Iowa writes the articles. We can not go into the technical matters discussed, but we are impressed by the meticulous care with which these birds have been studied and the slow, patient work of comparison which has gone on through the years. The claws of many of the birds engaged in excavating the nests have been found to be so worn and blunted by scratching that they were of little use in clinging. "The usual form, length, curvature, are soon attained once the period of excavation is over." Young birds accidentally falling into the water from the sheer sides of a gravel pit "without the slightest hesitation struck out strongly, swimming with quick powerful strokes. . . . Some of the birds swam from eight to ten yards and appeared to be none the worse for the experience." As an experiment three of the birds on arriving at the edge were tossed back lightly and came ashore again. A second time this was repeated and they swam with as much energy as ever. They used the wings as a means of propulsion.

The bank swallow is only five and one-quarter inches long, the barn swallow is seven and one-half inches and the purple martin seven and three-quarters. Purple martins I ought to know and sometimes do know, but my account with them is not a long one. Rough-winged swallows are the ones that I see most often on the Potomac or over the tidal basin in Washington. The Madame tells me that the rough wings, which also are bank swallows, nest in the stone work around the tidal basin and in the abutments of the bridges.

One of the noblest tributes ever paid to swal-

lows appears in John Burroughs' last book, "Under the Maples" (to which already I have referred). Mr. Burroughs has been describing the joy the swallows brought him as he sat writing in his barn study. Then he bursts out with more feeling than he usually shows with a tribute to swallows that fills two pages, of which I quote just a paragraph:

"Is not the swallow one of the oldest and dearest of birds? Known to the poets and sages and prophets of all peoples! So infantile, so helpless and awkward upon the earth, so graceful and masterful upon the wing, the child and darling of the summer air, reaping its invisible harvest in the fields of space as if it dined on the sunbeams, touching no earthly food, drinking and bathing and mating on the wing, swiftly, tirelessly, coursing the long day through, a thought on wings, a lyric in the shape of a bird."

Referring to the old superstition lately revived that swallows in winter hibernate in the mud at the bottom of ponds and streams, Burroughs says he would as soon think of digging up a rainbow in the mud as a swallow. "The swallow follows the sun and in August is off for the equatorial regions, where it hibernates on the wing buried in the tropical sunshine."

In Nice, on the Riviera, where she lived for several years, the Madame tells me that in the little shops the tradespeople sell olive-wood boxes and other souvenirs on which appear pictures of the swallows under which is the inscription: "*Revenez nous comme elles.*" It is a beautiful message. Few of us in all the comings and goings of life, with its long absences and separations, but would send after our friends and loved ones this message of the warm-hearted French—"Return to us like the swallows."

CHAPTER XLVIII

TWO SEPTEMBER WEEK ENDS

TWO week ends of the late summer stand out in striking contrast. When we came up at the very end of August for a few days, everything went wrong. When we came again on the eighth of September, God was in His heaven again. All was well with the world.

On the first trip I sliced off the end of my main writing finger, cleaning up the door-yard at Cobleskill—the worst cut since I was a small boy and meddled with a sharp scythe.

Perhaps viewed in the large, this putting my writing hand out of business was not an unmixed evil. But I thought otherwise, and went at it hammer and tongs to heal it up. Then I tore it open again the first day at the farm, trying to put down a stubborn window. So for that trip I was handicapped. Besides, the August heat had taken it out of me and there was no keen edge on anything except on the old piece of tin that cut me.

The Madame filled the house with purple asters, goldenrod, everlasting and Queen Anne's lace, the old clock ticked away friendly as ever, the kettle on the kitchen stove sang cheerily, but in the thermometer registering enjoyment the mercury stayed way down in the bulb. Then we remembered that land must lie fallow, and people must sag and let go and be quiescent, and the ebb tide of the spirit ought to be recognized and welcomed. As much as the flood tide and a half tide, it is a part of life.

The high spot of that first trip was not a mountain top, nor a deep gorge, nor even the fleeting glimpse

we had of the great northern pileated woodpecker. Laugh if you must—it was sitting in the dark in the old kitchen drying and warming my feet in the oven and listening to the trains climbing Richmondville Hill in the distance. For suddenly a light began to glow in the east, behind the shoulder of Pine Mountain, and then Jupiter appeared, magnificent in size, clear, pure, steady, serene. And a moment or so later the moon in the third quarter rose high enough to look down in the Hollow and signal, All's well.

There is always something in nature to speak the special word one needs. It may be nothing more than a grassblade brushing the face of Sidney Lanier as he lay exhausted on the bosom of the earth, or the flower in the crannied wall for Tennyson, but for the hour of need this old family doctor, "Nature," seems to be ready. The greatest one who ever lived found joy in the lilies of the field and in the birds of the air, and in the hour of his crisis he went alone under the olive trees where the little gray leaves helped bring the strength he sought.

The second trip was dedicated to our tree planting. Leaving Boston at 4.44 p. m., I reached Coboleskill at 1.15 a. m. Only the necessity of calamity or the pull of a great enjoyment could induce me to sit up for the late train in Albany. But a chance to be in at a tree planting at "the little hill farm" would make me even hop a freight if I could, or walk in if necessary the last few miles.

My brother had brought the trees in his car from the State Nursery at Saratoga Springs. My sister-in-law had taken them to the farm, where George, our friend and helper, had "heeled" them in, *i. e.*, set the little bundles in the ground just as they were and deluged them with water. When I woke up Saturday morning Stephen of Warnerville and Stanton of Hyndsville, who had helped us before,

already had cranked up their cars and started for the fray. The Madame and I laid in supplies and followed along promptly. When we arrived we saw the men well up the mountain in the high field just above the steep hillside which we had reforested three years ago.

It was glorious to start up the mountain after them. It was a glorious day to begin with, September but technically still summer. The wind in the northwest blew in our faces. The sun in the southeast warmed our backs. Both were welcome. We stood on the verge of autumn and the riot of autumn color was beginning. Apples of all shades of red and yellow showed through the dark green leaves. Along the fences stood the chokecherry bushes, whose existence we have fought for in the interest of the birds with every farmer who has worked our fields. We have two kinds, one garnet and the other such a dark purple as to look black.

Then there were the black wild cherries, and the pin cherries, and the scarlet thorn-apples. Down closer to the ground were the snakeberry and the poke. The long blackberry crop was at its height—quantities dead ripe, others red or green. The fruit of the false Solomon's seal showed in abundance and bittersweet ran over the walls and up into some of the wild cherry trees, the little lemon colored balls just ready to burst into wonderful deep orange. The elderberry bushes were heavily laden too with purple clusters, and George, the farmer, said that at his house everybody agreed that his mother's elderberry pies flavored with cinnamon "topped all the others." On pleasant Sundays now cars come out from city and village to help harvest the elderberries, but not, I fear, for pie.

Nature has two great color exhibitions, that of blossom time and that of harvest. It is lucky for us

that we do not have to say which we like best. Just now it seems as if nothing could surpass the time of fruiting.

All over upland and lowland was the tint of the goldenrod, quantities of the blue stemmed goldenrod and two or three other kinds. The leaves of one of the milkweeds had turned yellow and backed up the goldenrod. In the fence corners here and there a maple held out a scarlet branch in prophecy of what was to come a fortnight later. The poison ivy too—to give the devil his due—was turning an exquisite color.

Out of what was available at the farm the Madame had created a costume for the rough work. "A fine combination," she said as we started up the hill—a Marie Louise hat, a necklace, an old sweater and a pair of khaki trousers spattered with red paint—her first appearance in such a rig at the farm.

Looking off toward the mountain pastures, it seemed as if we were doing a foolish thing to "reforest." Was not nature doing it? Along every fence were maple, beech, hickory, oak, basswood and ash trees. Out in the fields also through the blackberry and rosebushes many a sturdy little tree was getting started. When, however, we reached the upper pasture, we saw that there was room enough for our 2,000 new trees and for many more besides. Our hills are steep hills, not just a little steep but so steep in places that one has to grab for grass or bushes to help keep his balance. Little step-like levels here and there, however, temper the ascent to the tenderfoot from the city.

On the steepest part we went through the Scotch, the red and the white pine and the Norway spruce which we had set three years ago, and we were cheered to find them growing beautifully, and already one or two feet high.

At the office of the New York State Conservation Commission in Albany, the scientists had got out their maps, studied our locality and advised my brother what kinds to set. "No more Scotch pine for you," they said. "They need room for a long tap root." Still so far our Scotch pine are far ahead of the others. "In your upper fields you have 'Lordstown Stony Silt Loam,'" said the scientist. All this was news to us except the stony part. "This year try European larch and white spruce," he advised. So there they were rapidly going into the ground. Straight up the mountainside the men worked—Stephen ahead—one, two, strike, one, two, strike, and with a single blow of the mattock he made the holes into which Stanton dropped the trees and then pressed them down with his foot. Previously we had set seedlings, this year we paid $4 a thousand for four-year-old transplants, beautiful tiny trees four to eight inches tall.

We were in the fourth field from the house. All our fields are named. Climbing the mountain, first comes the old orchard, next the big meadow or "high field," then the two steep fields reaching up to the woods which the Madame named the Lower Boomjes and Upper Boomjes (pronounced "Bome-ye" and meaning little trees), after the street on which we lived in Rotterdam, Holland, the first year of the war.

The men made us water carriers, tree carriers, and then extra hands to straighten up the trees and press down the earth. It was hard work for the men. It was fun for us. There is truth in the old story about Antaeus getting new strength whenever he hit the earth. The fresh turned soil—the sight of it, the feel of it, the smell of it—was revivifying. The men prefer to set trees in the spring when there is not so much vegetation, for then it is easier to keep a straight line, but we preferred the wallowing in waving grass and autumn flowers. One little tree

was set under a black-eyed Susan, another in a wilderness of goldenrod, a third in a forest of milkweed, a fourth beside a berry bush. The grasshoppers in swarms rose up before us and bumped into us, the ants crawled over us, even an inquisitive cricket now and then ran over the back of our hands.

The near-by and the far-away alternated for us. One moment we were down in a grass tangle among the roots of things, the next moment we turned and looked down our valley and out through a gap into the big world beyond. Now we were face down in earth, then face up to the deep blue sky and the endless procession of white slowly moving majestic clouds.

Getting so close to the earth we made interesting flower discoveries. There is a lovely orchid which we thought was rather rare up at the farm—"ladies' tresses." We discovered how rich we are in it. We found new chickweeds, some Indian pipe and some plants we have yet to identify.

The men kept at it bravely. We fell by the wayside. Benny, a yellow dog belonging to Stanton, expressed my feelings exactly. First along up the mountain, down the mountain, he followed the men. He chased rabbits. He dug for woodchucks. He sniffed for fox. He lived riotously, tumultuously, in the great out-of-doors! But by half-past two he began to beg to go home, and when night came he was a tired and chastened dog.

Unashamed in the afternoon I lay under a white ash tree and watched the men work, and unashamed I went off to the house and caught my forty winks. It was a great day, but the night coming on was not the worst of it. Benny drove off in his master's Ford, sitting up proudly on the seat. Stephen turned his big car and started after. Then I went in to supper, and as I sniffed it I said: "I do like this sort of thing better than any recreation in the world."

Good plain food, the sauce of a ravenous appetite, the rest that comes after toil, the memories of a perfect day, make such a supper table about the happiest that ever comes our way.

Monday morning George, the Madame and I took the last two hundred trees and finished the job. George wielded the mattock. We set the trees. We filled in a few vacant spots in the Lower Boomjes and then added two long rows to the planting in the Upper Boomjes.

Then George hurried away to get at his oats and we stretched out in the sun at the edge of the woods.

"Will we live to see these trees grow up?" said the Madame. "Yes, sure," said I, doubly optimistic under the blue sky and in the warm sunshine. "But whether we do or not, we have had our money's worth. The fun of the planting pays for the trees."

When she finished reading this chapter a dear friend and colleague pulled out of the drawer where she keeps fillers for the paper, the following verses. Not because we need a filler, but because they so perfectly express the mood of these hours among the trees, I quote them here:

If you love a tree, we are brothers!
All over the world, there are others
Who love many things: azure sea,
Or a robin-redbreast, or a bee
That's drowsing above the white clover.
There are lovers always, the world over.

But lovers of trees stand apart,
For trees strike down deep in the heart.
A man or a dog, we may help without end,
But a tree, living beauty, is ours to defend.
If you love a tree, in your heart is a shrine,
For the love of a tree is a love half divine.

Kalfus Kurtz Gusling, in Louisville Courier Journal.

CHAPTER XLIX

BITS ABOUT THE FARM

THE weather turned warm and the little trees just set out were in danger. "If we don't get rain," said Stanton, "they will all die." "Then I must water them," I replied. "Water two thousand trees all over the steep mountainside?" said Stephen. "That is back-breaking work. Life isn't long enough for such a job. Besides, where will you get your water?"

I spoke to George about it and he said that there was an ice-cold spring just below where we had been working, that it was all choked up now, but that on his way down he would dig it out.

Not noticing just where George went, and not asking him where the spring was located, we had quite a search for it the next day. However dry the weather and thirsty the ground, the scriptural description does not fit our farm: "A dry and thirsty land where no water is." A little stream comes down alongside the steep stony road to Summit. Another stream tries to follow the boundary between us and the neighbor on the north. Stony Creek itself, which drains the Hollow, runs merrily past our hop-house. And there are damp spots and water courses and "spring holes" all over the place. It is easy to trace the course of water soaking away through the ground, because the vegetation over such places is of a different character, the grass swamp grass, the flowers unlike those blooming in dry places, bushes here and there on the border line between the wet ground and the dry.

What deceived us with the spring that we were

after was that the real source was higher up than the apparent source. We followed the line of swampy vegetation up until it stopped, but no spring here had been dug out. After exploring other places for an hour or more, we came back and discovered that the water ran under rocks for some distance above where we had been standing and did not show. Pulling ourselves up to the shale ledges, we suddenly came upon the spring, bounded by the circle of mud which George had dug out, but clear as light on its rocky bed and cold as the water from the artesian well at the house. A veritable forest of sumach grew on the ledges above it—the dull red fruit everywhere rising above the green leaves—a large wild cherry tree stood a few feet away on one side, a tangle of blackberry vines hid the place from below, and a wonderful patch of white everlasting marked it on the north. A few years more and the pines and spruces set three years ago will turn this field into a forest, and it will be harder than ever to find the spring, but by that time, I trust, a path will be worn to it. I started the path by filling my bucket and climbing to the upper field to water the new trees. I made fifteen or twenty trips, watering ten or a dozen trees each time, and then yielded to the solicitations of the Madame to call it a day. "It shows a lack of faith in God," I observed after I had decided to quit, "to water too many of these trees. We'll have to leave some for Him." Before I stopped, however, I tried to dip out the spring—an almost hopeless task. I lowered it enough to see the intake from under the rocky ledge—as fine a *flow* as from our *flowing* well. And in a way it was all going to waste. The water, to be sure, finds its way at last into Stony Creek, into the Cobleskill, into the Schoharie, into the Mohawk, into the Hudson, and into the ocean, and in that sense nothing is wasted. But nobody gets the good of it at the source.

And water uncontrolled is harmful to the pastures, the wood lots and the meadows. One of our jobs for the future will be to make a course for this water to one of our streams. We shall not again permit the spring itself to become choked. It is a real asset. It makes a romantic place of pilgrimage. It offers rest and refreshment in the heat of summer. Already we are talking of building a one-room study on the ledge above it as a retreat—although for that matter it would seem as if the farm-house itself were retreat enough.

. . . . . .

A new motive for a walk is the study of the ferns. Nobody could be much more ignorant than we are on the subject. As long as I can remember I have occasionally gone after ferns, but if I had made a list it would have been simply maidenhair, brakes and plain ferns. On some of the walks of the nature section in Washington two or three years ago I began to hear references to the Christmas fern, the cinnamon fern, the New York fern and others, and then I realized how little I knew. Recently we have bought a little pocket handbook* and in a desultory way begun the study of the ferns. This book describes fifty common species and gives directions about identifying them. The author takes the position that to walk in the forest or to cross the open country anywhere and not know the ferns, "is like visiting an art gallery in which the finest paintings are turned to the wall." "For," he continues, "there is nothing that grows or lives that can approach the feathery grace, the symmetry of form, or the lacy elegance of pattern of the ferns! And to be blind to all this beauty is nothing less than calamitous." The book has been a delight.

---

*Field Book of Common Ferns. Herbert Durand. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London.

One thing about the study of ferns we know: a walk to find them takes one into the wildest places, up beautiful gullies, through deep woods, under the shadow of damp ledges, or over picturesque lots where the farmer seldom comes and where growth is a free-for-all and a go-as-you-please.

As with the wild flowers, it is a source of satisfaction to be able to name ferns. The maidenhair—to us the choicest of all—is easy. It is an old friend. In school days I sometimes went to get a bunch of it for my mother, who loved it. The sensitive fern also is easy to find, to learn, and to remember. It is out in the open. At the farm it may be found along the steep road up the hill. From Maine to the Gulf, and from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, there are quantities of it. Bracken, or brakes, also are common. They are large, coarse and abundant. Some people affect to despise them, but they have a dignity and majesty which few of the other varieties can equal.

The cinnamon fern stands out from others because of distinctive wand-like fruiting fronds entirely different from the other fern leaves. The Christmas fern grows in our woods in quantities. It is an evergreen. The long leathery leaves live through the winter, and we can find it under the snow.

We have started on the quest for the fifty common ferns mentioned in our book. It may take us years to find them, for the study will be a by-product and not the main objective of outings. Perhaps it will be with ferns as with birds, flowers and trees. Identification is slow business for a long time. One thinks he knows nothing. But bit by bit bird lore or fern lore or wild flower lore is tucked away, and eventually the gate swings open, and one walks with confidence as well as humility.

In one of the little nature articles which he contributes daily to the *New York World* J. Otis Swift

highly praises Mr. Durand's new book, and comments on the fact that although now there are 6,000 known species of ferns scattered about the world, geologists tell us that "this is a mere handful compared with the innumerable species which flourished when the earth was young." Quoting Durand, he says: "It is not to be doubted that in the course of ages ferns were evolved from marine plants and that flowering plants were, in turn, evolved from ferns. So they are inconceivably older than any other form of terrestrial vegetation now in existence. Their fossil remains have been found occasionally in the Devonian rocks, but are most abundant in those of the Carboniferous period. The coal that is mined to-day is composed almost entirely of ferns and their allies, which, it is estimated, lived and flourished and in fact constituted the only vegetation on the earth 53,000,000 years or so ago. Flowering plants did not put in an appearance until nearly 30,000,000 years later."

Durand dedicates his book "to all who follow the long brown path." He tells us that the ways of the ferns are "truly ways of pleasantness" and "the path to their dwelling places a path of perfect peace."

And that is true of most of the paths we follow in nature study.

. . . . . .

In September it seemed as if all the birds had gone. We felt rather lonely without them. But more were left than we realized at first. They merely were keeping very still.

Behind the big barn, in the thickets of a gully, we surprised a pair of phoebes. To the same retreat the next day we followed about twenty robins, and found them feasting on chokecherries and elderberries. The song sparrow, the chippie and the vesper sparrows soon showed themselves. The catbird mewed at us, a flicker called, a single barn swallow

flitted by, the goldfinches flew overhead, and two red-eyed vireos came near the kitchen door. Some birds lighted in the tops of tall trees up the hill, and with our glasses we saw that they were meadowlarks. To our surprise the great crested flycatcher, which we had missed altogether at the farm this year, suddenly appeared on the tip-top of one of our elm trees, his pale yellow breast pointed straight toward the setting sun. There surely seemed insects enough left for him. At no time of year are flies as numerous up there as in the early fall. The kingbird too had waited to get his share.

One of the birds which pleased us the most when we discovered him was the dear little northern yellow-throat with his black mask, in the bushes about the yard. When she sees him, the Madame always thinks of his near relative, the Maryland yellow-throat, then of Maryland, and of dear friends and happy days south of the Mason and Dixon line.

Two beautiful marsh hawks came floating by one day—the male gray, the female brown—in their endless search for frogs, mice, snakes, insects, or small rabbits.

Some of our permanent winter residents also showed themselves before we left, the noisy blue jay—not noisy at all this trip—the white-breasted nuthatch and the crow.

The black-capped chickadee was much in evidence, and how he fooled me with his love song in September! "There are two birds in that tree," I said to the Madame, "and the one I see is not the one making the noise." How she laughed as she explained that there was no phoebe present, that the chickadee was doing it all and that a late brood would be coming along.

The great northern pileated woodpecker gave his wild cry for us a number of times in the distance.

Once we saw him flying across the road just behind us, and we followed him up. The farmers loading the oats in a near-by field said he had passed overhead. He was flying straight for the deep forest in the gully on Cobble Mountain, where he makes his home, and it was too late to go there. But one glimpse of this wild bird marks any day for an ornithologist.

. . . . . .

In the mail forwarded to the farm, there came a circular letter from the House Committee of a New York club. It announced that through the efforts of the kitchen committee arrangements had been completed in London for the extension of the number of direct supplies of table delicacies usually unobtainable in New York. The club table was to have "York hams," "saddles of Southdown mutton," "Stilton cheeses," and, above all, "Scotch grouse." The shooting season in Scotland opened Monday, August 13, the first two dozen brace of birds left London on the 18th and arrived on the 27th. The British birds are brought over without freezing. This most delicious of foods is served with flavor unimpaired.

Against the background of this notice we took a little walk to see our own grouse. They may be flushed usually in the wildest part of the upper pasture or along the edge of the woods. They are the ruffed grouse, or partridges. This day we scared them up in the highway, which fact bears testimony to the remoteness of the region. Partridges do not feed in roads much traveled. Up like feathery projectiles they rose and disappeared toward the woods. One of the things we have yet to do is to watch and wait and observe them feeding. A study of the "Fall Food Habits of the Ruffed Grouse in the Syracuse Area of New York," by R. A. Johnson, in the *Auk* for July, 1928, tells us many things we have wondered

about, and makes our walks in the haunts of the partridge doubly interesting. This scientist made a laboratory study of the crops of twenty-six birds taken by hunters between October 15 and November 15. The animal content of the crops was negligible. The leading varieties of food in order of their importance as shown by the analysis were: 1, nannyberries; 2, sheep sorrel; 3, alnus catkins and leaves; 4, birch leaves; 5, beechbuds; 6, false miterwort; 7, clover leaves; 8, partridgeberry leaves; 9, birch buds; 10, thorn-apple. In one of the crops sixty-eight per cent of the contents consisted of the beautiful beechdrops which grow up beneath beech trees. In Wisconsin a study of ten crops showed them full of the hog peanut vine, and a study of two crops showed mainly the catkins of the hazel. Mr. Johnson says that the gizzards of several birds which he studied showed cherry pits and thorn-apple seeds where the food was not present in the bird's crop, "probably due to the fact that the season for these foods was almost gone when the birds were taken."

We often think of our grouse in the dead of winter, and we are reassured by these studies. After sleet storms which encase the buds in ice and cover vegetation on the ground, they may suffer, but they are very resourceful, they eat a great variety of things, and in our wild upper pasture there are quantities of frozen apples when all else fails.

Much as we enjoy the table we can not contemplate eating our grouse or quail with any pleasure. They are too scarce. Without protection they would soon disappear. Even as it is they are vanishing. We do not want any of our grouse killed. With the Scotch grouse it is different. Over there they know the value of game. They look after their preserves. They can even afford to permit shooting for the market.

We are glad to think of our friends in happy fall reunions dining on York hams and Scotch grouse. We should join them if we were near by. But with appetite whetted by our climb we find our beef and bacon a good substitute. The vision of the thorn-apple tree heavily laden with the scarlet fruit, the memory of the wild woodsy places where the ground is thick with the partridgeberry, and the thought of our grouse feeding in safety on our little hill farm, come to us at many a meal and make our bread sweet.

CHAPTER L

TALKS WITH NEIGHBORS ABOUT RELIGION

"HOW does it happen," said our old neighbor,* "that I never hear you say anything about your church? You seem to have a good word for the Lutherans, the Methodists, the Baptists, and the Reformed down at Cobleskill, and even for the Catholics, but I never hear you mention the Universalists. Pretty good lot too, aren't they?"

"Now you strike me in a tender place," I said in reply. "I love the Universalists and they have done a lot for me. I think so much of them that I don't like to talk about them. It sounds like boasting about your family."

"I know," he rejoined, "but we are interested in them too. They are not likely to come up in this hollow and start an opposition church. Let us know something about them."

"No," I said, "they are not likely to come up in the hollow, they don't believe in planting more churches than people can support. They don't like to split up neighborhoods. Besides, they have a good opinion of other churches and want to see them succeed. Of course, in places where there is little real religion, nothing but the dry shucks of harsh old theology, they are needed. I wish there could be more of them in such places."

"But what are Universalists?" said the persistent old man. "We don't have them around here."

---

*The old neighbor is a composite character made up of several individuals, in all of whom there was the inquiring mind, tolerant attitude and friendly disposition here represented.

"Yes you do," I replied quickly. "Old Deacon Brown is a universalist—not in the sense of being a member of the Universalist Church, but in the every day use of the word. A universalist is one who has interest in and sympathy for the whole human family. Did you ever notice that the Deacon pricks up his ears and pays attention, no matter what race or tribe is mentioned? He wants to know about all of them, and never does a waif or stray show up but what he tries to lend him a hand."

"Yes, he got me out," said the old neighbor, "to help break a road up to the old Van Batten farm just before Christmas. Said he had heard those folks who had moved back from 'Ioway' were having a rough time of it, hated to think of the children with no Christmas. Well, I went. It makes me choke up yet when I remember it. We got there late in the day in the Deacon's long bob-sleigh. Quite a tussle too. There they were all in one room, huddled over a poor measly little fire, a man, his wife, four children, the man sick, the oldest boy, poor little critter, trying to chop some green wood, nothing in the house to eat but a bit of salt pork and corn meal—about at the end of their rope. Well sir, I'll never forget it.

"The Deacon made for the woods, where he had spotted an old pine, and came back dragging some dead branches. He went for the fire first and got it roaring, then he told me to drag in a sack of potatoes he had brought, and I put some to cooking. His wife had stuffed and baked a pair of chickens, and he slapped them into the oven to heat up. What with the groceries he had brought along and two of Aunt Matt's big loaves of bread and a pie, we had a Christmas eve dinner under way before we left. It never was more needed. It never went straighter to the mark. I'll never forget till my dying day the way those children followed us around. You've seen a

dog look at you—well, they had that look. Nice behaved children too, and neat as a pin. As for the woman, she sort of broke down, but braced up and helped us. All she could say was 'God sent you.' You know that family is on the Richards farm now. Best family in the neighborhood. The man is a handy fellow and everybody needed that kind to help out. They'll never have another such winter. That Christmas eve was the turn of the tide."

"Well, I'd like to claim the Deacon as a Universalist with a big U," I replied, "but I know how he loves his New Light Church—Christian they call it I believe. He sure is a Christian, and he is a universalist in the best sense—with affections that are universal; 'God has made of one blood all nations of men' describes their faith."

"And thy neighbor as thyself," said the old neighbor. "I sometimes read the Old Book too."

"Now the only difference between a universalist with a small u and a Universalist with a large U is that the latter not only has interest in all kinds of people, but he is sustained and helped in his work by faith that God has that same interest, only greater, and that in time or eternity God will so work on men's hearts that even the worst ones like the Prodigal Son will turn back to the Father's house."

"A lot of us hope that," said the old neighbor, "even if we don't put it in the creed."

"I'd be the biggest kind of fool," I went on, "to claim that everybody with universalist ideas was in the Universalist Church or ought to be in it, or that the Universalist Church alone is responsible for universalist ideas. The Christian religion is responsible for such ideas. It sets no limits on the Power and Love of God and no limits on our duty to our fellows. Christianity is an all religion, 'thou grace divine, encircling all, a soundless, shoreless sea,' is sung in all

the churches, and the duties it inspires are practised in all the churches."

"But I reckon you Universalists have done your full share of the work getting those ideas over," remarked the old neighbor emphatically.

"Yes, I think so," I rejoined. "We are not numerous, but President Roosevelt once remarked that we had done more to leaven the lump with tolerance and good will than any other church. I heard him say it. I never wanted to boast about it, much as I loved Roosevelt, partly because he said emphatic things on many subjects and partly because boasting does not go with universalist ideas. The bigger a hat the more foolish a man looks strutting around under it. I'm afraid some of our folks strut a little, but all churches, I suspect, have their share of the big little folks, and the narrow broad folks."

"Yes, Bill Townsend and Frank Orr are two of them," said my friend, puffing reflectively on his old pipe. "One is Methodist and the other is Lutheran, but they are the same kind of animal—alike as two peas no matter what they say—not a very good kind either. Always touchy about their own church. Always trying to get something on the other fellow. No real deep-down religion."

"It is that real deep-down religion that we all respect and like," I added eagerly. "It is a part of a man's very life. It's what he is when he is in the dark or all alone. Twelve people of twelve churches, all of whom are good neighbors, don't differ much when you get down to the nub of things."

"One thing you probably realize," I said. "I am proud to belong to the Universalist Church. One hundred and fifty years ago Universalists came out of other Protestant churches because they could not stand the doctrine of an everlasting hell. It went against their idea of God, against the parables of

Christ, and against their own hearts. They started a new church and had a hard time. Neighbors turned their backs on them. People stopped buying at their stores. They were persecuted in dozens of ways. The worst thing said about them was that they held the idea that people could lie, cheat, steal, get drunk, commit adultery, and go shouting off to glory. Instead of that, they taught that punishment was sure—not even Christ could bear it for us—that we had to face the music ourselves in time and eternity. But that the love of God never would forsake us or stop trying to bring us back, that the story of the Lost Sheep was a picture both of the Limitless Love of a Father God and the equally limitless love of the son who so perfectly revealed Him. You ought to know," I went on quickly, "that much as Universalists make of faith and trust in God and the leadership of Christ, they make just as much of man's part in it. They believe God has called us to be co-laborers with Him—that we are to make the Kingdom come on earth, and that if all men are to be saved God depends on us to quite an extent to do the saving."

"Both here and hereafter," said the old man.

"Both here and hereafter," I replied.

"There will be poverty," I went on, "until we cure it, war until we build up courts to settle the troubles, disease until we find and destroy the germs or make people immune. The Universalist doctrine is that God is good and that God is bound to be victorious eventually with every man and every institution, and that we are God's agents to bring it about."

"Some contract," said the old man reflectively.

"But it puts zest and go into life," I concluded.

. . . . . .

"So you preached in the Methodist Church, down at Cobleskill," said our old neighbor. "Didn't you have to soft pedal your doctrine for those folks?"

"Did I act as if I were hiding something when I preached for you here in the hollow?" I rejoined. "It was no different preaching in that Methodist church down there than it was in our Lutheran church up here. For that matter, I have preached in Presbyterian, Unitarian, Reformed, Congregational, Baptist, and a number of other churches, and I even have been invited to preach in an Episcopal church and probably will some time. Also I have taken part in the service at a Jewish synagogue and conducted a funeral with a Catholic priest."

"Well, it looks as if all the churches were friendlier than they used to be," said the neighbor. "A good thing too. But how do you account for it?"

"Part of it," I said, "is probably due to everybody knowing more than they used to. Quarrels die out as intelligence grows. But our preacher in Washington made an address not long ago which everybody in our church is discussing, and in that address he said that almost all the churches have got hold of a new idea which sounds simple enough but which is changing their way of going at things. It is that it is more important to apply the gospel than to talk about it."

"Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only," said the old neighbor. "That is good New Testament doctrine."

"Yes, but it is a new idea for some of us," I continued. "We have been spending all our time insisting on some things about Christ. Now we are slowly realizing that the main thing is to try to live the kind of life that Christ lived. Our preacher says it is the difference between the religion *of* Christ and a religion *about* Christ."

"I never thought of that before," said our neighbor slowly, "but come to think of it things are different. Even up here in the hollow, we set more store on the man who is honest, kind, who pays his

debts and who returns the tools he borrows, than we do on the man who can recite the doctrine. I don't say doctrine isn't good, but I guess we think more about Christian deeds."

"That is so in the churches everywhere," I answered. "The churches which are thinking only about themselves are losing out. Those that are trying to help others are gaining ground. But our preacher said that another curious change was taking place in all the churches: As the churches have come to agree about the *purpose* of Christ they have come to agree about the faith and the belief of Christ."

"Just what do you mean by that?" asked the old neighbor.

"By faith I mean the thing deep down that a man thinks is true and acts on, whether he puts it into words or not, and by belief I mean what he says when he tries to tell it. Hanging on when everything goes against you, because you are dead sure there is intelligence and love back of you, is an illustration of faith. Saying, 'I believe in God the Father Almighty and in Jesus Christ His only son our Lord,' is an illustration of belief. The faith of Jesus himself showed itself in every act and word of his life. The belief of Jesus is put in his words that have come down to us. It is summed up in the Fatherhood of God, the unchanging Righteousness of God, the Brotherhood of Man and what our preacher called 'the Royal Law of Service.' 'In my Father's house are many mansions, or dwelling places,' is one of the most beautiful beliefs or statements of faith in the New Testament. 'Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit,' expresses the same thought."

The old neighbor thought it over for a while and then remarked: "I admit things have changed, but the creeds are the same."

"That is the very point," I said. "The creeds

we used to quarrel over and which used to separate us so widely are hard to change. To try to change them may split a church. But, contradictory as it may seem, that same church will quietly lay the creed aside. Of course there are some folks in every denomination who won't lay creeds aside, there are some parts of the country where they still talk considerably about them, but just the same churches as a whole to-day think much less about creeds or beliefs which divide them and think more about the great fundamental faiths they hold in common. So it is not strange that as Christians get together to carry out the purpose of Christ, they find themselves agreeing in the faith of Christ. People who go by themselves to pray as Christ prayed and follow his example of helping others feel drawn to other people who do the same things, whether in their church or some other. Church unity may come in time, but Christian unity is here to a surprising extent now."

"I hope so," said our neighbor. "I like to feel I belong to something you belong to, even if I was brought up to dislike Universalists. Good neighbors in the hollow ought to be good neighbors in the church."

. . . . . .

"I've been thinking about that change you say has come over the churches," began the old neighbor as he dropped down on the corner of the porch. "I'm a little afraid about one thing. Do you think people may get so busy applying the teachings of Christ that they won't have any time for their own souls?"

"Yes, there are such folks," I answered. "They don't go far enough. There is some applying to be made to themselves. Go the whole length. If Christ's principles are something to be lived instead of something to be discussed, remember that living starts close home."

"The reason I brought it up," said the neighbor, "was because last winter I visited a very religious cousin of mine out in Buffalo. It made me dizzy to follow him around. He went from committees and boards in the big church to all kinds of meetings at the chapel—for big boys, little boys, mothers, sisters, immigrants, I don't know what all—until I was worn out and I guess he was too, for he snapped me up pretty short when I asked him something about it. He said his church was an everyday church with something doing 365 days of the year. I told him I thought that was fine if he didn't get too tired to enjoy it."

"You've put your hand on a weak spot in our practical religion," I told him. "Some mighty fine Christians from the old world who are real friends of our country have told me that American hurry has gone into our churches, and that we'll have to get it out before we can find the peace of God. They said they had rather have us as we are with our emphasis on good deeds than to have us go back to the old way of letting this world shift for itself while we debated the creeds, but they asked me if I did not think we were bad exhibits of religion when we were hurried, worried, breathless and not altogether happy. I had to tell them yes, that we needed a few saints and that all of us might profitably try to get a little old-fashioned saintliness."

"I don't know about trying to be a saint," said our old neighbor. "I don't like the word much. But I do think if my cousin had a little more faith in God and if he left more things with God he'd get along better, and so would the committees and clubs and classes."

. . . . . .

"When you get down to it," said the old neighbor another time, "we are all in one boat. Everybody

in this hollow had to be born. Every one has to die. They all have to eat and drink and sleep, or there would be a quick end to them. The world is nothing but a big hollow—and not so big either. Our little day is too short for us to hate one another. We're up against the same things and we ought to feel for one another. I try to give the other fellow a hand and never be too proud to let him give me one now and then. And at least once a day I try to remember that it's all right up above as long as we keep on plugging down here. Whether I'm really religious, I have some doubts."

"I know you are a universalist," I answered. "I wish everybody in the Universalist Church was as good a universalist. I wish I was. I'm just a preacher and an editor, you seem to me to qualify as a practitioner of universalism."

"No," he said. "If I get your meaning. Only one ever lived in this world who really came up to universal ideas."